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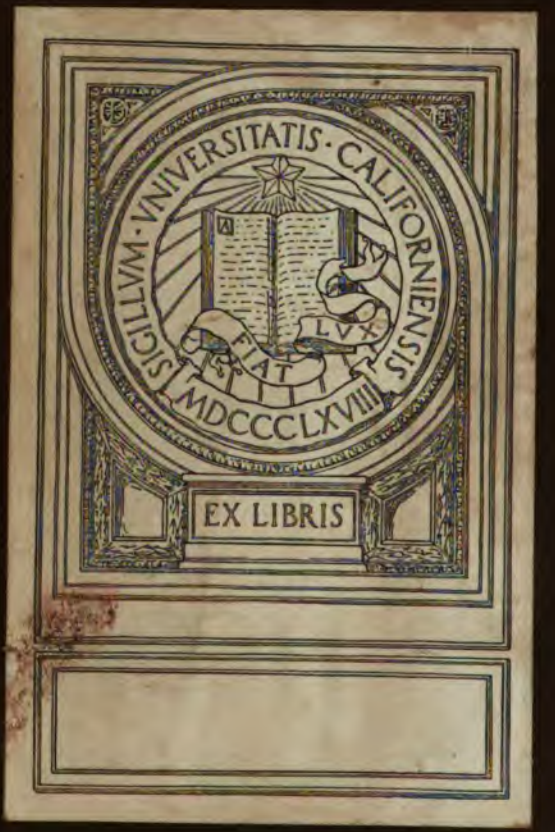
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THE

CHRISTIAN'S GIFT.

EDITED BY

REV. RUFUS W. CLARK.

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

For -

Mrs Anna P. Flanders - a memento - of affection and friendship, from her obliged friend - Sarah M. Emery -

THE CHRISTIAN'S GIFT.

I.

RUTH AND NAOMI.

BY REV. ANDREW P. PEABODY, D.D.

LITERATURE has nothing of its kind that will bear comparison with the touching pastoral of Ruth, in point of beauty, pathos, and eloquent word-painting of the purest affections. The portrait of Boaz, the princely husbandman, — his unstudied courtesy, his profuse hospitality, his munificent charity, his rigid uprightness, — is drawn in so lifelike colors, as to evince its own genuineness; nor is there any ancient record, which stands less in need of external proof of its authenticity, the whole series of incidents is so admirably in keeping with the blended simplicity, refinement, and nobleness of patriarchal times and manners. But

the two personages that interest us the most, are Ruth and Naomi in their relation to each other, — the self-sacrificing and the unexacting, — the one the type of what the young, the beautiful, the strong should be; the other, of what the afflicted, infirm, and aged ought to be.

Famine has driven Naomi, with her husband and her two sons, into the more fertile territory of Moab. For awhile they are prospered, and the sons marry daughters of the land, one of whom, Ruth, according to venerable Hebrew tradition, was allied to the reigning family. But father and sons pass in rapid succession to the grave; and, with the home-longing that always grows upon the aged, Naomi resolves to revisit her native soil, and in her penury to cast herself upon the ample charity which the law of Moses provides for the widow and the fatherless. What a rich resource for domestic toil and comfort, for her relief in want, for her solace in loneliness, for kindly care under the infirmities of growing years, would either of her daughters-in-law prove to her! And they are both ready to join her. Their love for the departed inspires them with filial tenderness for the living. But they have their home and

friends, their early ties and fond associations with the land of their birth; and in Judæa all will be new and strange to them. Naomi earnestly resists their willing sacrifice, and Orpah yields to her entreaties. But Ruth will not turn back. She knows, indeed, that she may be looked upon with suspicion or with scorn among that peculiar people, of sympathies so exclusive, with a law, a faith, and a ritual that isolate them among the nations of the earth. But, come what will, she cannot suffer the desolate widow to return alone.

They arrive at Bethlehem, where a new generation that had not known Naomi has taken the place of her kindred and early friends. They are destitute, and among strangers. And here we see renewed the loving conflict between the unselfish and the unexacting spirit, which had marked their departure from Moab. Ruth's whole care is for her mother's sustenance, ease, and comfort. She goes out to glean, that Naomi may live. With honest exultation, she pours at Naomi's feet each day's fruits of her own industry and of the charity of Boaz. In every step she seeks her mother's counsel, and follows her direction; and in every instance of success, it is for her mother chiefly that

she is glad. Meanwhile, Naomi's constant solicitude is for Ruth's safety, purity, and happiness. She shows not a trait of the selfish, exacting, querulous spirit, which age and penury are so prone to bring, when unfortified by religious faith and principle. She cherishes in her heart of hearts the costly sacrifice of country, home, and friends, which the young exile had made, and her incessant effort is that the sacrifice may be compensated by respect, honor, and prosperity in the land of her sojourn. Her whole life seems the counterpart of that beautiful benediction of Boaz, (was a richer form of supplication ever uttered?) "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

The uttered prayer of the princely kinsman, the dearest wish of the widow's heart, is fulfilled. The Moabitish stranger becomes the patriarch's bride; and as her first-born is laid in Naomi's bosom, the widow's cup of joy, that seemed drained to the dregs, is again full, while it is said to her, "Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel; and he shall be to thee a restorer of

thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age, for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him."

Fit mother was this adopted daughter of Israel for the royal line from the house of Judah. Nor can we help fancying, — it may be mere fancy, — that the fragrant memory of her virtues dwelt in the land of her birth, no less than in that of her adoption, and that for her sake, kindness and protection were shown to her posterity. When her illustrious descendant, David, was hunted like a wild beast, and tracked from covert to covert by the wrath of Saul, and when all his kindred were marked for the monarch's vengeance, he went to the king of Moab, and said, "Let my father and mother, I pray thee, come forth and be with you, till I know what God will do for me;" and the king of Moab gave them shelter and protection. Now, as the story of Ruth and this incident are the only two cases in which Israel and Moab appear under any relations but those of irreconcilable hatred, we are disposed to think that the one led to the other, — that it was on Ruth's account that David could claim and secure for his parents a home under the auspices of the Moabitish king.

Nor is it without satisfaction, that we mark the place of this stranger from Moab among the ancestry of our Saviour. She breathed the spirit of the cross. Her self-sacrifice was entire, unreserved, whole-hearted. She did, she gave, she offered what she could. Such spirits as hers were kindled by the foreshining of the gospel day. They were quickened by that Divine Word, which was in the world from the beginning, though it first became flesh and pitched its tabernacle among men in Jesus Christ. May it not have been from some such feeling as this, — from a sense of peculiar spiritual kindred between her and his Divine Master, — that St. Matthew, in his genealogy, gives her name, almost alone, among the female ancestry of Jesus?

Our main purpose, in calling attention to this narrative, is to present in combination the correlative virtues of daughter and mother. Ruth and Naomi belong together, are members of the same group, and reflect beauty on each other. Change either of them, — the other, though no less excellent, would awaken painful feelings, blending pity with our approbation. But, matched as they are, we feel that there is between them mutual com-

pensation to the full. Ruth is rewarded for her sacrifice by the unselfish affection and devotion of Naomi; Naomi, for her unwillingness to be a restraint or burden upon her daughter, receives, as a freewill offering sevenfold the kindness which an exacting spirit can extort, whether from kindred or hireling.

There are, in this regard, many ill-matched pairs and groups, — Naomis without Ruths, and Ruths without Naomis; and in domestic and social life, there are few more repulsive spectacles than they present.

First, there is the Naomi without a Ruth. Here there comes up before me the image of the unexacting mother in the decline of life. In the days of her strength she lived wholly for her children. For them she rose early, and watched late, and ate the bread of carefulness. Her maternal duties were almost her only pleasures. She practised the most severe economy, that they might not suffer, in comparison with their companions, as to the means of education and accomplishment. She husbanded her resources, that her straitened means might never expose them to mortification or embarrassment. It would seem as if she had

coined her whole being into provision for their welfare and happiness. Even now, in her age and infirmity, she requires nothing of them. She totters around under the burdens of domestic care and toil, that no weight may bow their young shoulders, that no routine of home-service may restrict the buoyancy of their spirits. She passes lonely days, and prolongs her vigils far into the night, that they may run the round of pleasure, and let no flower of their spring-time bloom ungathered. She never asks them for her sake to yield up a social engagement, or to shorten their hours of gayety, that they may cheer her solitude, or perform those loving offices in her frequent illness and feebleness, which flow with so sweet a grace from a daughter's ministry. She will not consent to summon them over from their sunshine to her shady side of life. Now nothing can be more rich and beautiful than this spirit on the mother's part, when the children are assiduous in proffering the unasked sympathy, the unsolicited duty. But we can hardly express in terms too strong our indignation, when we see the daughters of such a parent moving as in a sphere exclusively their own, refusing to touch with a finger

the burdens that she has so long borne for them, making fashion, pleasure, frivolity, the supreme business of life, and even in their mother's hours of sickness and suffering, leaving her to the tender mercies of a hireling. True, there may be nothing needful left undone; but to the mother, the daughter's voice, and smile, and hand, are worth more than the most costly attention, in which the affections bear no part, — they are the alabaster box of ointment shedding its fragrance through the whole house. Where they are wanting, the mother's heart pines and sickens. She knows not how to command or exact; — were the thousand offices of filial piety proffered, she would often decline them in her disinterested regard for her children's health and happiness; yet the withholding of them creates an incessant void, a weariness of spirit hardly less severe, — perhaps even more so as unrelieved by consoling and hopeful thoughts, — than that which follows bereavement through the ministry of death.

If any of our readers have begun to realize this portrait through settled selfishness, we can hardly hope to reach them by the mere reflection of their characters. But it seems to us that many

well-disposed young persons fall thoughtlessly into these selfish habits, without having — at least in the outset — the character which they would seem to indicate. They imagine that the unexacting parent really desires and needs nothing from them. They know not how hard it is for a mother to ask a favor or a sacrifice of her child, — how strenuously a mother will toil, and how devotedly suffer, rather than thwart a child's plans or abridge her liberty. They fancy that her non-remonstrance implies approval of their mode of life; that her silence gives consent to their omission of home duty; that, in seconding all their projects of unrestrained indulgence, she is cordially willing to forego their society and kind offices. But what begins in carelessness grows into obdurate selfishness. The wrong habit develops the vicious principle. The neglect of the daily sacrifice on the home-altar destroys the will and the power to offer it.

But it is not on the female side of the house alone, that we find these ill-matched groups. Not unfrequently we see the father performing hard service, the son at his ease; the father toiling for what the son squanders, the father bearing

burdens beyond his years; the son taking advantage of parental indulgence to lead a life without care, or, it may be, a life of wasteful pleasure and guilty excess.

On the other hand, we are compelled, sometimes, to see Ruth without Naomi, — the spirit of voluntary, cheerful self-sacrifice divorced from the unexacting generosity, which alone is its fitting counterpart. We miss the temper of Naomi in those sick and infirm persons who deem themselves licensed to complain, whom no service satisfies, whom no attention suits, whom kindness only excites to new exactions, who are offended by a happy face or a cheerful voice, and who feel as if the sky ought to be hung in mourning and the earth dissolved in tears, whenever they have an hour of illness or suffering. We miss it in those poor persons, who, like the daughters of the horseleech, perpetually cry "Give, give," who take with murmuring the services of the freest hand and the most loving heart, whose claims outrun their necessities, and grow with their gratification. We miss it in those aged persons who have no sympathy with the brightness and buoyancy of youth, who would be approached

only with muffled tread and subdued voice, and would restrain the young and gay from whatever indulgences and pleasures they can no longer enjoy. Where there is not the apology of age, we may see the same type of character in the stern and gloomy laws which parents would sometimes impose on the light step and bounding heart of childhood, — in the attempt to bow the youthful spirit into such stillness and sobriety as may quiet the undisciplined nerves, and suit the fastidious standard of those who forget that they themselves ever were children.

In the conjugal relation, the self-sacrificing and the exacting are sometimes most incongruously paired. The wife, perhaps, is all devotion, making her husband's will, taste, freak, or whim, her sacred law, watching his varying mood, studying his fancies, anticipating his least wants; while he is entirely a law unto himself, living as if he were made to be ministered unto, and she to be the servant of servants, exacting minute compliance with his incalculable caprice, and vexed by whatever cannot adjust itself to a temper which nothing in heaven or earth could ever suit. Or, perhaps, but more rarely, the husband is self-sacrificing to the

last degree, faithful in every provision for the possible need and comfort of his household, persevering in his devotion to their happiness; while the wife constantly demands indulgences beyond his condition, luxuries beyond his means, a free range among the gayeties and frivolities of life, that is fatal to his comfort, and turns his uncomplaining services and sacrifices to the disturbance of his peace, and the perversion of his home enjoyment.

Though in all these cases the spirit of sacrifice wins only the higher praise and warmer admiration, because so unworthily reciprocated, we cannot witness such instances without a painful sense of moral fitness violated; and we are sometimes disposed to hurl at the selfish party, a keen missile from the armory of the revealed word, and to say to those who make such costly sacrifices, "Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine; for see ye not how they perpetually trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

God hath made every thing beautiful in its place and season, and nothing more so than the sacrificing and the unexacting spirit, fitly joined together in mutual ministries. Never is youth so

charming, as when it loves to blend its morning beams with the clouded sunset of age and infirmity. Never does health present so attractive a spectacle, as when it stoops to bear the burden of sickness and decrepitude, sustains the suffering, watches by the dying. Nowhere is beauty so lovely, as when it shines with modest grace for the parent's eye, lights up with its smile the home of want and sorrow, and cheers the lonely and desolate with its angel ministries. And who does not find it in his heart to thank God for the wealth, which only makes its possessor the almoner of the Divine bounty, which has always its portion for the fatherless and the widow, which finds its choicest luxury in kindling the fire and spreading the table for the needy, which rejoices in affluence and leisure only that they may be spent in going about doing good? Equally lovely are all the forms of sickness, infirmity, penury, and affliction, when the sufferer always asks less and owns more than he receives, when no voice of complaint chills the kind hearts around, when there is still unabated satisfaction in the happiness of others, and gladness in the abundance of God's gifts, however few of them he may be able to enjoy.

We all of us are liable at any moment to change places, and the Ruth of to-day may in need or grief be the Naomi of to-morrow. We all have kindnesses to bestow, we all need sacrifices at the hand of others. Yet, in our diversities of relation, age, and condition, we may divide ourselves into two classes, — those whose place it is to minister; those whose privilege it is to be ministered unto. Into the former class fall the young, healthy and prosperous; into the latter, the aged, infirm, poor, and grief stricken. In general, it is only the Ruths that become Naomis; only those endowed, while they can exercise it, with the spirit of willing sacrifice, who in their need are unexacting, uncomplaining receivers and beneficiaries. Selfish youth lapses into peevish and querulous age. He, who is selfish in health, is repining and fretful in sickness. He, who is selfish in prosperity, is an implacable complainer in adversity, an insatiable beggar in poverty. Let the young remember this. Deem it, reader, a privilege to yield, to sacrifice, to minister, to do what in you lies to lighten every burden, to cheer the desolate, and to bind up the broken heart. Your turn for such offices will come soon enough;

and then, in cheerfulness and resignation within, in the full flow of kindness from without, and in your unselfish gratitude for every relief and favor, you will reap the rich harvest of your early charity and self-surrender. Give, and it shall be given to you. Show mercy, and you shall receive it. Cherish the spirit of sacrifice, and it shall be rendered back to you an hundred-fold in the life that now is, while a still nobler recompense awaits you in the resurrection of the just.

THE RESOLUTION OF RUTH.

"Farewell? O no! it may not be;
My firm resolve is heard on high:
I will not breathe farewell to thee,
Save only in my dying sigh.
I know not that I now could bear
For ever from thy side to part,
And live without a friend to share
The treasured sadness of my heart.

"I did not love in former years
To leave thee solitary: now,
When sorrow dims thine eyes with tears,
And shades the beauty of thy brow,
I'll share the trial and the pain;
And strong the furnace fires must be,
To melt away the willing chain
That binds a daughter's heart to thee.

"I will not boast a martyr's might
To leave my home without a sigh —
The dwelling of my past delight,
The shelter where I hoped to die.
In such a duty, such an hour,
The weak are strong, the timid brave;
For Love puts on an angel's power,
And faith grows mightier than the grave.

"It was not so, ere he we loved,
And vainly strove with death to save,
Heard the low call of Death and moved
With holy calmness to the grave,
Just at that brightest hour of youth
When life spread out before us lay,
And charmed us with its lores of truth,
And colors radiant as the day.

"Yet rays of heaven, serenely bright,
Have gilt the caverns of the tomb;
And I can ponder with delight,
On all its gathering thoughts of gloom.
Then mother, let us haste away
To that blest land to Israel given,
Where faith unsaddened by decay
Dwells nearest to its native heaven.

"And where thou goest I will go;
With thine my earthly lot is cast;
In pain and pleasure, joy and wo,
Will I attend thee to the last.
That hour shall find me by thy side;
And where thy grave is, mine shall be;
Death can but for a time divide
My firm and faithful heart from thee."

WHERE HAST THOU GLEANED?

RUTH ii. 19.

"WHERE hast thou gleaned to-day, immortal one?
In paths of sensual pleasure, where the flowers
Of earthly fragrance have thy pathway strown —
And didst thou rest in those terrestrial bowers?
Young pilgrim! pluck them not, they 'll wither on the way,
But gather that which nourisheth, while yet 't is called to-day.

"Where hast thou gleaned to-day? In scanty fields
Of poverty and wretchedness and wo?
That barren ground yet rich instruction yields,
Unfolding lessons it is good to know.
Ne'er may the smiles of Heaven, which hover o'er thy lot,
Be in the daily sacrifice unnumbered or forgot.

"Where hast thou gleaned to-day? Amid the strife
Of those who sow, to reap and gather gold?
Leave — leave this waste and weariness of life,
And reap ye — gather ye that wealth untold,
Which to your earthly course will be 'the pearl of price,'
And open for the humble one the gate of Paradise.

"Where hast thou gleaned to-day? The ample plain
Where Knowledge spreads her banquet — where the tide
Of intellect sweeps through the broad domain,
In all its depth and power and pomp and pride —

Say, hast thou grasped at shadows, which the sun
Of pure religion hath not shone upon?

"Where hast thou gleaned to-day? From Wisdom's page,
Where Truth her heavenly banner hath unfurled?
Where priests and prophets have, from age to age,
Foretold the glories of the eternal world?
Then linger here, immortal one, nor let thy footsteps stray
From Him who is the Holy one — 'the Life, the Truth, the Way.'"

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II.

A REFUGE FROM THE STORM.

BY RIGHT REV. THOMAS M. CLARK, D. D.

It is not always that we feel the conscious need of supernatural help. Difficulties sometimes arise, which our own wisdom can solve; fears disturb us, which a cheerful voice can dissipate; trials occur, which human sympathy can alleviate. But there are emergencies, when we are driven home to God. And then we must grasp an arm that is not made of flesh. We must open our minds to a mind that is not human. We must ascend to a higher level than the plane of earth. We must get clear of the turmoil of polemics. We must find our way to God, and hear from his lips the words, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

Such a season is that, when the clouds of doubt gather over the horizon, and obscure the sun of

truth. Every human being, who uses his faculties with earnestness, is subject to this trial. It is one of the appointed elements of our discipline. There could be no true faith, if unbelief were impossible. It would have been perfectly easy for God to have rendered all spiritual truths so certain, that we could not have doubted. He might have authenticated them through the same kind of evidence, by which we distinguish the night from the day. But, in this case, they would have lost half their value. For the moral process by which we arrive at truth, is as important to us as the truth itself. It is for this reason that the Bible is so constructed, as to leave the door open for interminable discussions and endless variations of opinion. The interpretation depends upon the condition of mind which we bring to its study. Its plastic truth is moulded into shape by the form of the soul that receives it. The Divine wisdom is presented to us through the medium of human intellects, and is variously tinged by the various channels through which it comes. Light is colorless, and so itself is never seen; but it makes objects visible, when it falls upon them; and it does this, by being resolved into its prismatic

hues. So the pure truth of God is inappreciable by finite faculties; but when it is repeated, decompounded, modified by passing through the atmospheres of human thought, it lights up the universe with splendor. And we receive just so much of that truth as we are capable of receiving. We may, if we will, close the windows of the soul against the light, so that midnight shall reign there; or the fogs of prejudice may so envelop the soul, that it is only twilight there; or we may throw the soul wide open, and then we enjoy the fulness of knowledge, and the repose of implicit faith.

All this being so, there may be times when every thing falls into confusion. The evidence of truth, upon which we once confidently rested, crumbles away. Our forms of belief sound dry and hollow. And yet it is not the scepticism of indifference which troubles us, — that is never troublesome to its subject, — but of a deeper earnestness; we long for a real belief, for something upon which we can rely in any emergency, for a faith which can light up the passage to the tomb, and usher us peacefully into eternity. How much there is professed, which is not thus be-

lieved; as if the benefits of faith could be had, merely if we do not deny the faith!

In this state of mental disquietude, when the honest tongue falters in pronouncing the accustomed creed, and every argument seems unsatisfactory, when the processes of our own thoughts jostle and overturn each other, and the mind longs for some demonstration which cannot be gainsayed, there is always one place of refuge, — in the shadow of the Almighty's wings we can find a shelter, until the calamity be overpast. If we only flee thither, we may be sure that, sooner or later, the hour of darkness will pass by. Perhaps it was allowed to descend upon the soul, just to drive us to God. This may be our first act of real faith. Confidence in God is the seminal principle of all genuine belief. If we have absolute trust in Him, we cannot go far astray. And nearness to God is our only effectual security against the assaults of scepticism. All error and all sin consist in wandering away from God. In His presence we are safe; away from Him, all is dreariness and darkness. Man was never made to be independent of his Maker. The instinct with which a child, in the hour of dimness and bewil-

derment, clings to his father, dreading to be left alone, shuddering at his own fancies, and shrinking from his own thoughts, is an expressive type of the higher feeling with which we should cleave to our Father who is in heaven. We have a Father, and he is not far from any one of us. He hears our first low cry, if it be only breathed in faith. He will never desert us, unless we desert Him.

"O come that day, when in this restless heart
Earth shall resign her part,
When in the grave with Christ my limbs shall rest,
My soul with Him be blest!
But stay, presumptuous — Christ with thee abides
In the rock's dreary sides;
He from the stone will wring celestial dew,
If but the prisoner's heart be faithful, kind, and true."

There is another emergency in which we have no other refuge but God, and that is when we are burdened with the consciousness of guilt. I have said that all sin consists in wandering away from God, and so repentance consists in simply returning to God. Whenever the transgressor "comes to himself," he immediately says, "I will arise and go to my Father."

It seems like a season of dire calamity, when the offender first becomes conscious of his sin,— although, indeed, it is the unconscious sin that we have most cause to fear,— for this hour of conviction is often one of strong crying and tears, and we taste the full bitterness of death. The stricken transgressor feels that he is cut off from God, and the sense of dreary isolation weighs heavily upon him. The shades of night are gathering around, and he finds himself in a strange country, alone. He is lost among the dark mountains. The sun has gone down, and no stars shine. There is not a gleam of light in earth or in heaven. The wind sweeps as from the valleys, laden with cold vapors. He cries for help, but no human ear can hear. He has gone out from his home and is lost. His case seems hopeless. It would be hopeless, but for one fact, God has never ceased to remember him, all the while that he has forgotten his God. There is a merciful eye that has watched his every footstep. A father's love will not allow him to desert his offspring, even though they prove themselves unworthy of his love. And when his sins and his sufferings have brought the erring child to his

knees, so that he loathes his sin and ceases to repine at his sufferings, then the Lord manifests himself, and the Angel of the Covenant draws near. The discipline of sorrow has done its work, Calvary opens, and in that sure refuge he finds rest and peace to his soul.

And these are calamities that come upon us in the ordinary course of nature, in which there is only one effectual refuge. We meet with disappointments and losses, which our own energy can redress or repair. When we strike the earth, we rebound by our own elastic force, only to stand firmer than before. But these are trials in which our natural strength fails us. They are such as time can never heal, and no human power alleviate. They make the world another place to what it was before. It never afterwards looks as it once did. In our most cheerful hours, when the brightest smile lights up the face, there is one chord in our secret heart that vibrates mournfully. When the landscape looks fairest and Nature keeps her merriest holiday, there is one small green mound more precious to us than all the world beside. It seems strange that the earth should continue to bring forth her flowers. The moan-

ing winds of autumn suit us better than the lively carols of spring. There are memories of which we do not often speak, because words cannot utter them, that are never absent from our thoughts. There are precious tones, perhaps, forgotten long ago by all the rest of the world, which come to us every night in the stillness, and fill the air with mournful melody.

Up to the hour when this stern sorrow fell upon us, the resources of earth and our own energy had sufficed for every emergency. But under this blow, the soul is broken. Nature gives way. There is no shelter here from the storm. And then, in our desolation, we look up to God and say, "In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast." The calamity is not overpast, but we have found strength to bear it. The fountain of sorrow is not dried, and we have no wish that it should be, for we have received blessing from its bitter waters. Our trials have bound us closer to our God. We have Him for our portion, whatever else be wanting. The world hangs more loosely, it is bereft of many charms, it has ceased to stir our ambition, and its pleasures have lost their old

attractiveness, but there are bonds of sympathy which now connect us with other worlds, which are more abiding. Truths have become real, which had no such reality before. We have seen the face of Christ, and heard gracious words from his lips. We know the purpose of his mediation, for we have experienced its necessity. Our religion is now a life, and not a dogma; a substance, and not a shadow; something which we can grasp, and feel, and stay ourselves by in any extremity. Death is disrobed of half his terrors; we feel that it is his touch which throws open the door of existence. Through the darkness of our present affliction, we see the gleaming of bright stars above. The fears which once haunted us are gone, for perfect love has cast them out. We have new "songs in the night," which fill the soul with happiness. Christ dwelleth in us, and we cannot fear what man or demon can do unto us.

The one deep sorrow that we have experienced, has lightened and relieved every other sorrow.

"O Father of our spirits,
We can but look to Thee;

Though chastened, not forsaken,
Shall we Thy children be.
We take the cup of sorrow,
As did His blessed Son, —
Teach us to say, with Jesus,
Thy will, not ours, be done."

GOD AN UNFAILING REFUGE.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove
To the confiding bark untrue;
And if she trusts the stars above,
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous oak, in pomp outspread,
Full oft when storms the welkin rend,
Draws lightning down upon the head
It promised to defend.

But thou art true, incarnate Lord,
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die;
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word
No change can falsify!

I bent before thy gracious throne
And asked for peace with suppliant knee;
And peace was given — nor peace alone,
But faith, and hope, and ecstasy.

WORDSWORTH.

III.

THE SABBATH IN ITS ADAPTEDNESS TO PREPARE MEN FOR HEAVEN.

BY REV. WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D.D.

In what I am to say of the Sabbath in this article, I shall, of course, recognize the institution in its legitimate connections. The day may indeed be passed, and profitably passed, in silence and solitude. The Christian may stop in the bosom of the wilderness, with nothing but God's heavens for a canopy; and there may be no sound there unless it be the music of the birds, save only his own voice uttering the accents of supplication and praise; and still the gracious design of the Sabbath may be accomplished in respect to him; he may have, like the Patriarch, visions of heaven, and may leave the place calling it Bethel. But in order to complete the idea of

the Sabbath, we must include the ordinances which God has been pleased to connect with it; — every religious privilege, public or private, which it brings within our reach. However it may be with many of our fellow-creatures, — with many even of our own countrymen, — to most of those whose eyes will pass over this page, it is given to enjoy a *full* Sabbath: there is nothing that they could ask, nothing that they could even imagine, that would cause the day to return upon them more richly charged with blessing.

Let me say then, in illustration of my subject, the Sabbath is *a noble and impressive symbol* of heaven.

God hath given to every thing a voice; hath constituted every thing a teacher; and there is no object or event so obscure or insignificant, but that it is always giving forth some lesson to man in respect to his higher and better interests. The Son of God is indeed the great Teacher, — the fountain of illumination; but He disdains not to employ as subordinate coworkers with Himself, the sun, moon, and stars, — the mechanism of nature, the economy of providence, — every thing that comes within the range of our vision or the

sphere of our knowledge. And it is a proof of his sublime wisdom that he should have established this universal ministry of good, so that man, be he wheresoever he may, is always within hearing of his Maker's voice. The method of teaching by symbols, dates back to the first morning that smiled upon the creation; for that was a Sabbath morning; and the Sabbath was, from the beginning, an emblem of the rest that remaineth for the people of God. How far this may have been understood in the earlier ages of the world, we cannot determine; but in the light of succeeding centuries, especially in the light of the Christian dispensation, it is put beyond all question that this sacred day was designed by God himself, to be an illustrious type, — I had almost said, a beautiful miniature likeness, of heaven.

Behold, then, how the Sabbath, in its symbolical character, lends its influence in aid of man's preparation for the heavenly state! It returns upon the multitude whose spirits have never been attuned to the joys of heaven, to remind them that there *is* a heaven; and how naturally does this become the starting point to a course of serious reflection! If there is a heaven, so

also there is a hell; and here is the dread alternative in respect to my future being. If there is a heaven, then there must be certain qualifications requisite to obtain it; — but have I the least evidence of having gained these qualifications? If there is a heaven, there surely is no time to be lost in securing a title to it; and wherefore am I thus indifferent when immortal interests are depending? Let me awake to a sense of the needs of my impoverished spirit; — to a sense of what I may gain on the one hand and what I may lose on the other; and let me welcome the rebuke which these sacred hours bring to me for having been so absorbed with my relations to earth, as to neglect to form any relations with heaven!

Still more impressive is this symbolic teaching of the Sabbath, in regard to those who have already the seeds of the heavenly life. Notwithstanding God has marked them as the heirs of his kingdom, and they are accustomed to look upward when they think of their richest treasures, still their spiritual perceptions are often dimmed, and their spiritual sensibilities often chilled; and if you can trace in their characters the image

of the heavenly, it is, at best, in feeble and dubious lines. To these also, to all who profess to be citizens of Zion, the Sabbath speaks in tones of celestial sweetness, bidding them remember the glorious rest to which they are bound. The voice of God seems to mingle itself with its morning beams, as they fly over the creation, saying to every follower of Jesus, — "Let thy soul rise and stretch its wings towards thy destined home. Whilst thou art yet a sojourner on earth, cultivate the spirit of heaven, and give to thine affections more and more an upward tendency." Yes, Christian, the Sabbath, merely as a symbol, and independently of the exalted privileges which it brings with it, is for ever preaching to thee concerning heaven; and in proportion as thine ear is open to the teachings of the one, will thine eye be open to the glories of the other.

The Sabbath is fitted to counteract those habits and influences, which are *adverse* to our obtaining heaven. Here, again, I speak in reference to both those who have not, and those who have, entered on the Christian life.

One great hinderance to our preparation for heaven is *ignorance*. The object of religious faith

is the divine testimony; and that testimony may embrace subjects which, in their remoter bearings, we cannot comprehend; but we must know what the testimony really is, otherwise it is impossible that we should receive it; so that what is, in one sense, an object of faith, is, in another, an object of knowledge. Now there is something in the Bible, revealed to our faith, which the Bible itself makes essential to salvation; for its own language is, — "He that believeth shall be saved," and "He that believeth not is condemned already." But if knowledge, in the sense of which I have spoken, is a prerequisite to faith, — in other words, if we must know what God requires us to believe, before we can believe it, then is knowledge, (I speak here of those only who have the means of knowledge,) a no less essential requisite to our obtaining heaven.

What is true of faith is equally true of repentance, — another of the grand qualifications for heaven. You cannot exercise genuine repentance, without some intelligent view of the law of God, — the great instrument of conviction of sin, as well as of the motives to repentance, growing out of the claims of God and the

love of God, and the redemption of Christ, — all of which are supplied by divine revelation. You may, indeed, feel the stirrings and the stings of natural conscience; and the future may flash upon you in a scene of wrath and terror; and your passions may be wrought up, for a time, to the fury of a tempest; and yet the rebel heart may be beating in your bosom, in as vigorous pulsations as ever. But if you will exercise *true* repentance, you must know how, and why, and for what; and without some degree of this knowledge, as sure as you imagine yourself a penitent, you will be a self-deceiver.

And I may say the same of obedience to God's commandments; — it has its springs, its motives, in a cordial belief of the truths of God's word, — a belief which presupposes an acquaintance with those truths. I am not speaking here of that accidental obedience which takes its rise in a naturally amiable temper, whose actings are not always wholly restrained by false maxims of conduct; nor yet of that artificial obedience which has no inward living spirit, and which is the result of calculation how far a man must go in seeming to do right, in order to be able to face the future; but I

speak of that obedience which puts in requisition not only the outer man, but the inner man, the whole man, — now, henceforth, and for ever; and of this I say unhesitatingly, its very primary element is knowledge; and other things being equal, its purity, its intensity, will be the greater in proportion to the amount of knowledge with which it is associated.

Now if you will estimate aright the importance of the Sabbath, in enlightening man's ignorance concerning those subjects which involve his immortal well-being, — just suppose that this divine institution were blotted out, and that the Bible were left, independently of this mighty auxiliary, to work its way to the understandings and hearts of men. You might multiply Bible societies, and print Bibles, till the last family on earth was supplied; and yet even this effort would leave you with a world of heathen upon your hands. For because men love darkness rather than light, they will not come to the light, but the light must be carried to *them;* and it is not enough even that you put it into their dwellings, but you must stand and hold it forth before their eyes. The Sabbath returns, like a good angel, at brief inter-

vals, to perform this benevolent office. And how many kindly and efficient instrumentalities does it put in operation! Is it not a part of the Sabbath work of the Christian mother, to store the minds of her children with divine truth, and to endeavor to give it, its due effect upon their hearts and lives? Does not many a good man improve these quiet hours, in carrying instruction to the degraded and outcast, and thus planting himself down for a conflict with the prince of darkness in the very heart of his own dominions? Does not the Sabbath school unfold its arms of charity, and invite all who will, to come and be enlightened in God's testimonies? Above all, does not the sanctuary gather those of every rank, of every age, of every character, within its hallowed inclosure; and however indisposed some may be to listen and to apply, may it not be presumed that a portion of the truth that is proclaimed, will find a lodgement in their minds, and may it not be hoped that a divine influence will constrain them into the attitude of eager and docile hearers? I know, indeed, that the minds of any or of all these, may be brought in contact with God's truth without feeling its quickening power;—nay, their final

condemnation may be aggravated by the abuse of their religious knowledge; nevertheless, even a possibility of their attaining heaven, according to the revealed economy of God's grace, involves the necessity of their being in some degree enlightened; and hence I honor the Sabbath, because it pours upon the unrenewed world, a great and blessed tide of Christian instruction.

And how is it in reference to those who have actually set their faces towards heaven? Suppose an individual, renewed in the temper of his mind, to be permanently exiled from the ordinances of God's house, and to have his lot cast where the Sabbath passes uncared for and unthought of,—unless, indeed, it be signalized as the great secular holiday of the week; and allow to him even a Bible and any other religious books he may choose to have;—I do not say that he will not be a Christian still; but I do say that if there is any thing to be known from the past, he will be but a poor proficient in religious knowledge; and there is danger even that the history of his Bible, will come to be the history of a comparatively neglected book. But suppose that this individual, instead of being removed in the providence of

God to a region where man acknowledges no Sabbath, were to live in a world where God had appointed none, — what would the measure of his knowledge of divine truth be then? Suppose the thousand voices that speak to him on this sacred day were hushed, and the innumerable influences that urge him to the private study of God's word, were withheld, — would he ever attain to more than the stature of a babe in scriptural knowledge? The Sabbath, like the sun of righteousness, sheds light into the Christian's understanding, as well as joy into his heart. In its public ordinances, he recognizes so many channels of religious instruction. In its hours of comparative quietude and freedom from worldly care, he finds opportunity to call to mind what he hears in public, and inwardly to digest it by devout meditation. Thus he is constantly growing in knowledge; and his growth in knowledge is part of his growth in grace.

Another great hinderance to embracing religion, or to advancing in religion, is *worldliness*. With the unsanctified, this may be said to be the ruling passion; and this passion must be bowed and broken, else there can be neither admission to

heaven, nor susceptibility of heaven's enjoyments. Almost the whole arena of life seems to be a scene of idolatry. Wealth, honor, pleasure, — the world in some form, not only attracts, but rivets and entrances; and it is not too much to say that the idol-worship of Christian countries is just as intense, though not as gross or as universal, as of Pagan countries. Upon what instrumentality, then, are we to depend for casting down this idol from the throne, and introducing in its place the legitimate occupant? I answer, chiefly upon the Sabbath. True, indeed, God is not straitened in his works of mercy; and there *are* cases in which men who recognize *no* Sabbath, are still met by the Lord of the Sabbath, and almost as marvellously as was Saul the persecutor; but even in such cases, the work is rarely performed, without the help of religious ordinances; for the awakened conscience, the inquiring soul, will seek to put itself in the atmosphere of instruction and devotion. Tell me not that these devotees of the world have the Bible in their houses, and that that may suffice to impart to them a sense of their danger and their duty. You have not considered that this very spirit of worldliness oper-

ates to prevent them from reading the Bible; and how will they be the better for having divine truth shut up in a book, and stowed away in a closet? But when the Sabbath comes, they who have not reverence enough for the Bible to look into it, have yet respect enough for themselves to appear in the sanctuary; and while God's servant draws the bow at a venture, God's spirit directs the arrow to some flinty heart; and from the pierced heart there is a gushing forth of penitential sorrow; and then there is a new traveller setting out on the way to heaven. When I contemplate the past, and think what myriads of souls it has sent up to glory, and when I look over Christendom at this moment and notice the vast throng that are still pressing upward, I cannot forbear to say, had there been no Sabbath, how small a proportion of these would have ever broken away from the world's fascinations, and been enrolled as the followers of the Lord Jesus!

Would that the spirit of worldliness had no other lodgement, than in the bosom of the unrenewed; but alas, it acts too often, like a withering blast, or a consuming fire upon the Christian's vital energies. And is there any other antidote

to its influence to be compared with the Sabbath? Perhaps you are a poor man, and are obliged to work hard to earn your bread. Perhaps you are a rich man, and have as much as you can do to look after your great possessions. Perhaps you are a merchant, and have large commercial engagements, and your mind is busy night and day in extending your connections, and maturing and carrying out your plans of gain. Perhaps you are a lawyer, or a judge, or a statesman, and feel that the cause of your clients, or the claims of justice, or the interests of your country, press hard upon you, and leave you with little time for any thing beside. And yet, after all, you are on your way towards the better country; but at what rate, think you, would you travel, without the aid of the Sabbath? Is it not refreshing, delightful, to come to a weekly pause from all worldly engagements,—to recognize in these sacred hours a breathing time for the weary spirit,—a time for the heart to fly to its God and unburden itself of all that oppresses it,—a time to get a fresh taste of God's loving-kindness, and a fresh foretaste of the rest that remains for his people. And after the private and public duties of the

day are over, after you have been in the sanctuary and found it good to be there, and been in your closet and found it good to be there, — in short, after you have spent the whole day as God would have you spend it, — do you not feel a renewal of your strength, a revival of your graces, a better preparation for the duties of the week before you; and as the week passes on, is there not a preserving, a quickening influence imparted to you through the recollections of the Sabbath past, and the anticipations of the Sabbath approaching? You feel, Christian, that it is as much as you can do, beset as you are with so many opposing influences, to advance even slowly in the spiritual life, — and *that* with all the helps which God has graciously supplied to you; — what then would you do, if nearly all these helps were to be withdrawn, in the blotting out of God's holy day from your religious calendar? We complain now, and justly enough, that the love of many waxes cold; but if there were no Sabbath to quicken the languid flame, could it have any other than that tremulous existence, that always marks the point of extinction?

One more hinderance to obtaining heaven on

which the Sabbath acts with great power, is *procrastination.* There are those, no doubt, who are so desperately infidel, as to disbelieve a future state altogether; — of course, *they* cannot be said to procrastinate their preparation for heaven. But all who believe that there *is* a heaven, unless, indeed, under an exceeding sense of their guilt, they have come to despair of God's mercy, — secretly intend and expect, by some means or other, ultimately to reach it. They may be ready enough to acknowledge that they have not the necessary qualifications now; but then they see an indefinite period in prospect, and at some point this side of their last step in the dark valley, — perhaps they do, and perhaps they do not, decide where it shall be, — they expect to be dressed for admission to the marriage supper of the Lamb. In nothing do men deal more treacherously with themselves, than in this matter of procrastination; for it implies a resolution to do that hereafter which they are not willing to do now, when the difficulties by which the work is attended, are constantly increasing. And let me say this spirit operates more frequently by an insidious and insensible influence, than in a distinct and formal

purpose to delay. By some instrumentality or other, the sinner's conscience is brought in contact with the powers of the world to come; and there comes up from the depth of his spirit the solemn inquiry, what he must do to be saved; and a resolution succeeds that he will enter on the straight and narrow way that leads to life. But with this resolution he goes into the world; and the world courts him back to her embrace; and now his thoughts grow less and less troublesome every hour. He knows it not, but he is falling under the tempter's power; and unless there be some strong counteracting influence, his good impressions, his good purposes, will quickly have vanished. And whence arises any hope in his case? Why, chiefly from the Sabbath. *That* brings him to the house of God; and here the sword of the Spirit again falls heavily upon his conscience, and he feels more deeply than ever that there is a mighty work upon his hands; and he leaves the sanctuary only to go to his closet to ponder upon the truth which he has heard, upon the resolution which he has nearly broken, upon the fearful alternative of heaven or hell that now urges itself upon him. It is in the

sanctuary that the procrastinating spirit most frequently meets an effectual rebuke. Here the dying embers of conviction are fanned into a flame; and this process is sometimes repeated, not once but often, before its end is accomplished in a spiritual renovation. The language which the Sabbath holds to every delaying sinner is, "Why will ye die?" "Behold, now is the accepted time!"

And think you that the habit of procrastination is confined to the irreligious? Think you that this same spirit never creeps over the followers of Christ, obscuring their evidences, withering their joys, abridging their usefulness? I tell you, many a good purpose that the Christian forms, perishes under precisely this influence; and many more *would* perish, but that the Sabbath interposes to prevent it. You have resolved within yourself that you will perform some benevolent deed in behalf of a fellow-creature; or that you will be more circumspect in your general intercourse with society; or that you will be more earnest and diligent in cultivating a spiritual mind. Now while this resolution is, perhaps, a relief to a restless conscience, its indefiniteness in respect to

the time when it shall take effect, makes you easy in the postponement of it; and who knows whether it would ever be reduced to practice, if the Sabbath did not come to quicken your sense of obligation, and warn you against delay? If the amount of service rendered to Christ on earth, is to be the measure of glory bestowed by Christ in heaven, then surely the Sabbath accomplishes much for the Christian, in rebuking him out of that listless spirit of delay, that would rob him of part of his eternal reward.

The Sabbath enlists the *social principle* in aid of our training for heaven.

The social principle is at once a source of enjoyment and of efficiency. Whatever happiness individuals may find in yielding themselves to solitary meditation, it admits of no question that the highest happiness that God has ordained for man is to be found in society; in the commingling of minds and hearts, in reference to matters of common interest. The joys of the little child are rendered more intense, by being imparted to some bosom that is open to receive them; and the philosopher who has found out a secret path through the heavens, will not expe-

rience his full measure of satisfaction, till he has led other philosophers over the bright track, and even the world itself is put into communion with him, in respect to his discovery. To this principle belong also all the tender sympathies of our nature, in the indulgence of which we lose, in some measure, our sense of the bitterness of grief. But there is in it not only a power to soothe life's sorrows and heighten its joys, but to awaken lofty impulses, and lead on to vigorous action. Be it so that it takes but a single mind to *conceive* a great purpose, — yet in all ordinary cases many great minds are put in requisition to *accomplish* it. How preposterous would be the suggestion that a solitary individual should achieve our country's independence, or overturn the throne of France, or even build a magnificent edifice; — and yet neither of these enterprises has proved itself an overmatch for the combined energies of a multitude! You have no idea of the actual power of man, from contemplating the separate power of individual minds; it is only when you see the social principle operating to bring them into united and harmonious action, that you are prepared to pronounce an intelligent judgment upon their capabilities.

Now this principle which so immediately identifies itself with man's highest capacity for both enjoyment and action, the Sabbath turns to the best account in preparing him for heaven. Witness its operation in the Christian family, where there is a blending of hearts in the study of God's word; where religious instruction and counsel are communicated with parental tenderness, and received with filial reverence and love; where the voice of prayer is quickened into unwonted fervor, diffusing an air of solemnity and yet of gladness over the domestic circle, and rendering all the hallowed associations of the day tributary to the spirit of devotion. Witness it in that goodly coöperation of kindred minds for elevating the moral condition of society, — for pouring light into the darkened understanding, or consolation into the troubled heart. Witness it, especially, in the public services of the sanctuary, — where the word dispensed by one is heard by many; and the prayers offered by one become the prayers of many; and the holy communion administered by one appeals to the devout sensibilities of many; and the measure of light and strength and comfort that is received, is greatly

increased by the community of interest, and the diffusive glow of Christian affection. As man is a social being, so the Sabbath is preëminently a social institution. It binds the pure in heart together with the golden cord of sympathy; and renders each the happier and the stronger for the fellowship of privilege and duty which it establishes.

The Sabbath greatly *enlarges the intercourse* of earth with heaven.

I know that when I speak of man's communing with God, or God's communing with man, I utter that which, in one view, is a profound mystery: concerning the mode of contact between finite and infinite, between my own spirit and the Power that created and sustains it, I profess to know nothing. But I do know all that is essential to my availing myself of this high privilege. I know that my Father in heaven has an open ear, when my spirit breathes towards Him only in a whisper. I know the new and living way that leads to his throne, and the gracious help to my infirmities which he permits me to hope for. I know that his promise is pledged that he will draw near to me when I draw near to Him; and

even if my own experience should pass for nothing, I could bring a host to testify that to *them* the promise had been made good. In short, if the intercourse of man with man is a reality, not less is the intercourse of man with God; if sense opens a channel of communication, so does faith also; and whatever of mystery may pertain to the subject, I will be content reverently and gratefully to enjoy the privilege, and leave the mystery to be looked at in some brighter light.

Now this intercourse of which I speak, not only actually exists, but is carried on continually; — there is not an hour or a moment in which supplication is not going up, and blessings coming down through the appointed medium of divine mercy. Every Christian's closet, every domestic altar, forms a connecting point between the visible and invisible; between man's poverty and God's infinite fulness. But while earth is thus always, in a greater or less degree, in communion with heaven, it is on the Sabbath that the heavens may be emphatically said to bow and the earth to rise; for then are other voices mute that the voice of supplication and thanksgiving may be heard; and God reveals Himself to his congre-

gated people in blended majesty and mercy. If the Psalmist could say in reference to the Jewish temple, — "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary," — with at least equal propriety may we hold the same language in regard to *our* places of worship; for if God does not meet his assembled worshippers now with the same *visible* tokens as he did his people of old, yet he meets them as truly, and visits them with even a richer blessing. And while he is present by his own immediate influence, he commissions his angels also to perform towards his waiting saints a gracious ministration; and no doubt if our eyes could be open, as were the eyes of the astonished prophet, we should sometimes know that we are really in other company than our senses take cognizance of; that there are rapt spirits in our places of worship, dressed in the livery of heaven, who have dropped down from their native skies, not only to witness, but in some mysterious way to aid, the purity and fervor of our devotions.

Is it possible then, I ask, to form too high an estimate of the Sabbath, in this view, as a means of preparation for heaven? Why, Christians, it puts you, for a time, not only into a heavenly at-

mosphere, but into heavenly company; it brings you, in a peculiar sense, to "Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." With such a host of celestial inhabitants round about you, with such an amount of gracious influence pressing upon you, can it be otherwise, than that you will forget the things that are behind and below, and press forward and upward? While heaven is thus breathing upon your spirits, can it be that you will not become more vigorous for the heavenly race, more enamored of the prospect of heavenly glory?

The Sabbath schools the spirit in the *exercises* and *employments* of heaven.

Heaven is indeed a place of rest, but not of inaction. There is rest from all life's conflicts, and trials, and wearisome labors, — rest in the sense of undisturbed peace and perfect security; but there is no rest, nor is there occasion for it, in any sense that supposes imperfection. The

faculties there, are incomparably more vigorous than here; and there is no veil interposed to shut out the objects upon which they act; and the mind which, after a brief period of labor here, instinctively seeks repose to recruit its energies, will there find itself nerved by each successive effort to penetrate some profounder mystery, or to take some loftier flight. Bodies, indeed, there will be in heaven, — the same bodies essentially in which our spirits now dwell; but having passed through the refining process of the resurrection, every gross and earthly element will be expelled from them, and instead of embarrassing, they will only aid and quicken the soul's operations.

And if heaven is a scene of perpetual activity, in what manner are our faculties to be employed, — towards what objects are they to be directed? We can answer this question but imperfectly; but we know that the saints in glory are occupied not a little in exercises of devotion; they rest not day nor night from ascriptions of glory, and honor, and thanksgiving, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. We know that they are eager in exploring the works of God, especially the marvellous work of redemp-

tion, by which his glory is chiefly illustrated. We know that they are employed in an everlasting ministration of benevolence, — not indeed in supplying want or relieving sorrow, — for want and sorrow are words that have no meaning in heaven, — but in rendering each other's joys more intense by such offices of beneficence, as one perfect spirit may perform towards another. With the little concerns of earth they have nothing to do; but all their faculties are engaged in pursuits, worthy of their immortal destiny, and adapted to advance them from glory to glory.

Look now at the legitimate exercises of the Sabbath, and see whether you do not recognize in them the same employments in kind, though of an infinitely humbler type, with those which occupy the ransomed in heaven. Are those blood bought spirits glowing with pure devotion; casting their crowns, in token of gratitude and love, at their Redeemer's feet? — and are you not actuated by a similar spirit, and engaged in a corresponding service, when you join in publicly offering up your devout thanksgivings, and especially when you commemorate your Saviour's dying love in an ordinance bearing the stamp of

his own authority? Are they eager in the pursuit of divine knowledge, — earnest students of those mysteries with which the angels also desire to look? — And what else is your attendance on the word but an effort, or rather a systematic course of effort, to be always increasing *in* the knowledge of God? Are they joined in a fellowship of beneficent activity, — each one the happier for the contribution which he makes to the common bliss? — And do not your visits to the hovels of the poor and the beds of the dying, as well as your efforts to enlighten the ignorant and save the lost, bring into exercise the same spirit of charity, though modified by different circumstances, with that which pervades and hallows the communion of the glorified? Surely, Christians, the Sabbath returns upon you to give you an opportunity of doing heaven's work here upon earth. You are taking lessons here for immortality. You are singing songs here to prepare you for the everlasting song. You are listening to truths here that you may be qualified to follow out the same truths under the advantages of higher teaching. You take the sacramental symbols here, that the bread of heaven, the new wine

in the kingdom of the Father, may be more welcome to you. You cultivate all holy affections here, that they may bloom in a brighter maturity, when they shall be brought directly beneath the condensed effulgence of the Son of righteousness. Christian, thou art a mere tyro here, just at the beginning of thy course; thou art indeed doing elementary work; but when heaven's immortal splendors shall blaze upon thine eyes, and heaven's thrilling anthems shall tremble on thine ear, nothing shall occupy thee, nothing shall entrance thee, the elements of which thou wilt not be able to find in the work of thine earthly Sabbaths.

SABBATH EVENING.

How calmly sinks the parting day!
Yet twilight lingers still;
And beautiful as dream of Heaven
It slumbers on the hill;
Earth sleeps with all her glorious things,
Beneath the Holy Spirit's wings,
And, sending back the hues above,
Seems resting in a trance of love.

Round yonder rocks the forest-trees
In shadowy groups recline,
Like saints at evening bow'd in prayer
Around their holy shrine;
And through their leaves the night winds blow
So calm and still, their music low
Seems the mysterious voice of prayer,
Soft echoed on the evening air.

And yonder throng of clouds,
Retiring from the sky,
So calmly move, so softly glow,
They seem to fancy's eye,
Bright creatures of a better sphere,
Come down at noon to worship here,
And, from their sacrifice of love,
Returning to their home above.

The blue isles of the golden sea,
The night arch floating by,
The flowers that gaze upon the heavens,
The bright streams leaping by,
Are living with religion — deep
On earth and sea its glories sleep,
And mingle with the starlight rays,
Like the soft light of parted days.

The spirit of the holy eve
Comes through the silent air
To feeling's hidden spring, and wakes
A gush of music there!

And the far depths of ether beam
So passing fair, we almost dream
That we can rise, and wander through
Their open paths of trackless blue.

Each soul is fill'd with glorious dreams,
Each pulse is beating wild;
And thought is soaring to the shrine
Of glory undefiled!
And holy aspirations start,
Like blessed angels from the heart,
And bind — for earth's dark ties are riven —
Our spirits to the gates of heaven.

G. D. Prentice.

SABBATH EVENING.

"The holy time. The evening shade
Steals with a soft control
O'er nature, as a thought of heaven
Steals o'er the human soul;
And every ray from yonder blue,
And every drop of falling dew,
Seem to bring down to human woes
From heaven a message of repose.

"The mists, like incense from the earth,
Rise to a God beloved,

And o'er the waters move as erst
The Holy Spirit moved;
The torrent's voice, the wave's low hymn,
Seem the fair notes of seraphim;
And all earth's thousand voices raise
Their songs of worship, love, and praise.

"The gentle sisterhood of flowers
Bend low their lovely eyes,
Or gaze through trembling tears of dew
Up to the holy skies;
And the pure stars come out above,
Like sweet and blessed things of love,
Bright signals in the ethereal dome
To guide the parted spirit home.

"There is a spirit of blessedness
In air and earth and heaven,
And nature wears the blessed look
Of a young saint forgiven;
Oh, who, at such an hour of love,
Can gaze on all around, above,
And not kneel down upon the sod
With nature's self to worship God!"

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IV.

THE HOLY ANGELS.

BY REV. ROLLIN H. NEALE, D.D.

THE Scriptures recognize two classes of created intelligences, the human race upon the earth, and the angels whose dwelling-place is in heaven. Whether in the immeasurable spaces of creation there are other rational and accountable beings, is not revealed, and no philosophy can determine. It is scarcely reasonable, however, to suppose that the earth is a "lone star" in existence. It is natural and certainly pleasant to the imagination to believe that there are other orbs besides our own, floating in the immensity of space, replete with life, and over which sin and sorrow have never cast their baleful influence. But whether this be imagination or reality, certain it is that ours is not the only world that God has made, nor

men the only beings in the universe capable of honoring and adoring the Creator. The Bible makes us acquainted with angels, their abode, their character, and their employments. I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. Heaven is their home, as earth is the dwelling-place of man. They are in the immediate presence of the Deity, occupying the most exalted stations, and employed in the sublimest service.

They are referred to as the principalities and powers in heavenly places, to whom is made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. Whenever any of this order have visited the earth, their appearance has corresponded with their high rank and station. It is said of the angel that rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, that his countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow, and for fear of him, the keepers became as dead men. Another seen in the visions of St. John the divine, is described as being clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was, as it were, the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire.

Angels are represented as strong and mighty in power, as holding the four winds of heaven, and executing the judgments of God on the guilty. One alone, slew of the army of Sennacherib, an hundred fourscore and five thousand men. Another is described as stronger than the strong man, as being able to bind the prince of the power of the air, and actually casting him into the bottomless pit, and setting a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more.

Angels are still more distinguished for their strength of intellect. They are described in the Apocalypse as being full of eyes, denoting the number, quickness, and strength of their perceptive powers. The human mind is obstructed in its operations by the infirmities of a mortal frame, and by the limited power of the mediums of sensation. With all the aids and facilities which art has hitherto furnished to our natural vision, we can see but a small portion of the Creator's works, and them only through a glass darkly. But the angels have no such obstructions. They are represented as all sense, all intellect, all consciousness, ranging at pleasure over boundless fields, and

contemplating the character of Jehovah as developed in all places of his dominion.

Angels are still more distinguished for their moral excellence. They are emphatically denominated the holy angels. They were made in the divine image, and from the time of their creation they have been continually serving God day and night in his temple; and as they were originally pure, and have since been debased by no sin, tarnished by no spot, weakened by no imperfection, but having gone forward for thousands of ages in the path of rectitude, all radiant with the glories of heaven, what an elevation, what a strength, what a sublimity of moral character must they now have attained! And how inspiring the thought that there is an order of intelligent beings, so exalted in station, so strong in intellect, surpassing the most distinguished men that have ever lived on earth in their resources of wisdom and knowledge, and yet that there is in them no moral defect! Goodness, purity, and love, are their crowning excellences. Among human beings, such is the folly and infatuation of man, that the lustre of intellect and learning is dimmed and obscured by the debasing influence

of vice. And too often men occupying the highest stations of authority, are sunk the deepest in moral degradation, and send down, as from mountain heights, dark and turbid waters upon the plains below. But this unnatural state of things we have reason to hope is confined to our fallen world. The light of revelation discovers to us an order of beings, the number of whom is ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, occupying the most exalted stations, with preëminent power, and rich in mental resources, but whose predominant features, nevertheless, are sincerity, beneficence, truth, and love. All their powers are under the control of a high moral sense. Intellect is subservient to the heart. The highest delegated authority directed and governed by a still higher law.

Look now to the services in which angels are employed. They rest not day nor night, but are continually praising God in his temple. They are not the passive recipients of an undefined enjoyment, nor are they idly gazing, as is often imagined, upon scenes of glory; but all their powers are in active and cheerful exercise. "Bless the Lord ye his angels that excel in strength, that

do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word."

The most important part of the service in which angels are employed, is connected with the work of redemption. This is their favorite mission. They are interested in all the works of God, but in this more than in any other. When the material heavens were created, these morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy; but when the plan of salvation through God's anointed was made known to them, their thoughts were absorbed by the mighty theme. They beheld with wonder the mystery which had been hidden from ages. Every fresh development that was made, every opening leaf of inspiration, every page of the gospel was contemplated by them with an interest never felt before. When Christ became incarnate, an angel announced his birth, and a multitude of the heavenly host joined in celebrating the occasion in notes of loftiest praise. "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good-will towards man." Although they were not, like human beings, in need of redeeming mercy, having no guilt to be atoned for, and no sins to be forgiven: although

Christ in pursuance of his plan, did not assume their nature, nor identify himself with them as with the human race, yet as there was in this proceeding such a wonderful exhibition of the divine character, such a mysterious union of justice and mercy, such a hatred of sin, combined with the most melting tenderness and compassion for the sinner, these friends of God, these servants of the Most High, desired to look into it, and gratify their love and adoration of the supreme divinity, by feasting their vision upon the brightest glories of his grace.

Another part of the service in which angels were engaged, was in attending upon Christ's personal ministry. Interested as they were in the plan of redemption, joyfully announcing as they did the Saviour's birth, they would naturally wish to follow him in his subsequent work. Accordingly they were present at his baptism. They attended him in the wilderness. They were near by at his crucifixion. Legions of them were ready to come to his aid, yet as he was to tread the wine-press alone, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, they stood aloof in silent and awful expectation. But no sooner were they suffered

to approach him, than they entered upon the welcome mission. They rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and hailed with joy his resurrection from the dead. At his ascension they escorted him to heaven, and are now employed in rendering honor and glory, dominion and power to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the lamb forever.

Another service in which angels are employed, is in watching over and aiding the progress of Christ's kingdom upon the earth. They have a deep interest in the success of the gospel, and in the recovery of the human race from their present guilt and misery. They are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation. The Scriptures teach that there are evil spirits in the world, in the body and out of the body, also wicked men and seducers, who wax worse and worse, who sleep not unless they have done mischief, and whose sleep departs from them, unless they have caused some to fall. These spirits are present to suggest evil thoughts, to deepen prejudices, to inflame unsanctified passions. Thus the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, is working by a thousand emissaries in

the hearts of the children of disobedience, and multitudes are carried captive by Satan at his will. So, also, on the other hand, there are good spirits in the world, suggesting thoughts of God, and reminding us of Christ and heaven. Holy thoughts, serious reflections, come unlooked for into the mind. They come in our waking hours, and in the silence of the night, when in society and when alone. These are whisperings from heaven, the suggestions of some ministering angel, either of those who have never fallen, or, it is not unlikely, of the redeemed from earth. For glorified spirits are as the angels of God, enlisted in the same service, and moving in the same exalted spheres. It is affecting to think that some near friend, a parent, perhaps, is near to his child, and by an eloquence addressed directly to his heart and conscience, is thus seeking to lure him to the paths of virtue and of Christ.

Another class are employed not only in bringing down good influences from heaven, but in carrying back good tidings from earth. They are ascending and descending as upon the ladder of vision. They notice every instance of conversion. They hear the sighs of the penitent. They

know the conflicts which agitate his bosom. They tremble in view of his half formed resolutions, and when at length he comes to a decision, and casts his guilty and helpless soul upon the atoning blood of Christ, and thence feels in his bosom the quickening influence of a new life, angels carry the news to heaven, and louder and sweeter sounds than were warbled forth at creation, are heard echoing and reëchoing throughout the kingdom of glory. "For there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over every sinner that repenteth."

Another service of angels is to watch over the people of God while in this state of temptation and trial. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him. My God, said the prophet, hath shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me. When Peter and John were incarcerated for preaching the gospel, an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them forth and said, Go stand and speak in the temple all the words of this life. Thus it is the privilege of the faithful to know that the eye of God is upon them, that his ear is open to their cry, and that some one or more of the high

and holy inhabitants of heaven, are constantly near to guide and guard us by their superior wisdom and power, and to throw around us those refreshing influences of sympathy and love, which flow from pure and exalted natures. Oftentimes the Christian when dying, has been able to realize that angels filled the room.

> "Hark, they whisper, angels say,
> Sister spirit, come away."

All this is what might be expected. Rejoicing as they do over the sinner's conversion, they would follow him to the end, they would naturally be present with the dying saint, calming his fears, lighting up his countenance with the smile of peace and hope, and ready to attend the departing spirit to its home on high. No retinue of the victorious warrior, no proud escort of the sovereigns of the earth can be compared with that which is ever attendant upon a soul redeemed. The angels of God are around the disciple from the first; they guard him amid every scene of temptation and trial; they wipe away his tears; they inspire him with hope, and leave him not until the last enemy is overcome, and he freed from

danger, from sorrow, and from sin, shall become himself as the angels of heaven, and join with the redeemed in that "new song," "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and the Father, to him be glory, dominion, and power, for ever. Amen."

THE ANGELS.

BY MRS. ELIZA WALTON CLARK.

WHENCE came the angels? did they come
From quick command, as came the Light?
Or, "clouds of glory," did they roam
From some far distant starry home,
Beyond the reach of Sin and Night?

Ah! surely they have somewhere known
A trial time, — a test of Life.
Never had they so lofty grown
Had they not bravely, nobly borne
The upward march of sternest strife.

Struggle must e'er success precede,
Prizes reward tried loyalty;

And they who shining legions lead,
Doubtless have earn'd that royal meed,
By tested, proved fidelity.

How could they moral power attain,
Without the force by which 't is won, —
Without resistance, — toil to gain
The highest good? — sublimest pain!
Pain sanctified by God's own Son!

Yet still, they never may have known
Sin's guilt; its deep defiling gloom.
— God's husbandmen — they may have sown
A natural harvest, — richly grown,
Now waving with immortal bloom.

How blest! to feel no sinful stain
Has e'er defaced the loyal soul;
No burden of regretful pain,
No evil habit's iron chain
Has stamped the seal of its control.

Oh, that this blissful lot was mine!
Oh, that to me the fate was given
With angel purity to shine,
With angel gifts my path to line,
And shed around a glow from Heaven!

On earth to bless, — on earth to save,
With angel wisdom, angel power!

While from my soul, kind Lethe's wave
Would hurry to Oblivion's grave,
The record of each sinful hour.

Be hushed my heart! nor idly dream
Of angel blessedness on earth;
Nor fancy that as pure a gleam
Would flow along the Lethean stream,
As on the wave of heavenly birth.

A wave! a *sea* of love o'erflows,
Ready to wash away each stain;
And deep we have, amid our woes,
One joy, that Gabriel never knows,
— *For us, the Lamb of God was slain.*

O Lamb of God! to us belongs
The matchless treasures of thy grace!
And all the mem'ry of thy wrongs
Is lost amid the nobler songs
Thus waked in Heaven, thy dwelling-place.

Amid the angelic ranks above,
In shining garments, richly dressed,
Peculiar bands of spirits move
Baptized with Thine own name of Love,
And with Thy choicest favor blessed.

Such the Redeemed; — and know, my soul,
They keep for thee a waiting lyre.

Elect of God! in Christ made whole,—
Thou soon shalt join the songs that roll
From Jesus' own appointed choir.

Help me, my God, to keep in view
Christ, the Redeemer's glorious reign,
Help me, a mortal's work to do,
A mortal's mission to pursue,
That I, an angel's place may gain!

MY NAME.

BY FLORENCE PERCY.

"After you have taken your new name among the Angels."

In the land where I am going
When my earthly life is o'er,—
Where the tired hands cease their striving,
And the tried heart aches no more,—
In that land of light and beauty,
Where no shadow ever came,
To o'ercloud the perfect glory,—
What shall be my Angel name?

When the spirits who await me,
Meet me at my entering in,
With what name of love and music
Will their welcoming begin?

Not the one so dimmed with earth stains,
Linked with thoughts of grief and blame, —
No — the name which mortals give me
Will not be my Angel name!

I have heard it all too often,
Uttered by unloving lips;
Earthly care, and sin, and sorrow,
Dim it with their deep eclipse.
I shall change it, like a garment,
When I leave this mortal frame,
And at Life's immortal baptism,
I shall have another name!

For the Angels will not call me
By the name I bear on earth;
They will speak a holier language,
Where I have my holier birth.
Syllabled in heavenly music, —
Sweeter far than earth may claim, —
Very gentle, pure, and tender, —
Such will be my Angel name!

It has thrilled my spirit often,
In the holiest of my dreams;
But its beauty lingers with me,
Only like the morning beams.
Weary of the jarring discord,
Which the lips of mortals frame
When shall I, with joy and rapture,
Answer to my Angel name?

V.

THE HOLY CHILD JESUS.

It is difficult to realize that the Lord of glory was a little child; that the Wonderful, the Counsellor, was a babe in Bethlehem. Yet he who assumed our nature for the benefit of man, assumed all the stages of it, that his sympathy and goodness might flow forth to those of every age and condition in life. Little is recorded of his childhood and youth, yet that little serves as a partial opening through which we can look into his early history. Why we have not more, when every incident would have been of such thrilling interest; when every saying would have been carefully treasured up in the pious heart; when so many instructive examples might have been gathered from the youthful circumstances and trials of the Messiah, is a question that perhaps we cannot

answer. It might have been providentially necessary that he should not in his early life attract too much of the public attention, as it might embarrass his future plans and labors. Opposition might too early have raged against him, or his qualities and powers and mission might have excited the jealousy of the rulers and chief priests, and led to his destruction before he had entered upon the great work of his public ministry. The circumstances that followed his birth, the terrible slaughter of the innocents by the bloodthirsty Herod, the necessary flight into Egypt, foreshadowed his future, if the public gaze was intensely fixed upon him. And the fact that after he stepped forth publicly upon the stage of life, his presence and his doctrines were tolerated but three short years, reveals sufficiently what would have been his fate earlier, had his opinions and plans been known. Indeed, his obscurity was referred to in the sneering inquiry, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth," that wicked and vicious town in Galilee? Yet the early circumstances and developments in this mysterious and wonderful life, were all that a stupid and ungodly gen-

eration could receive with safety to the young Messiah. If they only knew of his humble mode of life, and that he was a Nazarene, they had only their own wickedness to thank for their ignorance. Gladly would he earlier have withdrawn the veil; gladly would he have unfolded to multitudes, at this early period, the great truths of the new dispensation, but he knew too well what would be the effects of such a revelation.

Still, although the record is so brief of the childhood and youth of Jesus, we can easily fill up the outline. We can easly imagine through what paths holiness would lead the child, what duties it would impose, and what achievements in private circles, and as opportunities offered, would be wrought out, through its abiding influence. We have the general statement by St. Luke, that he "grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." But we have also an incident on record through which we can look into his youthful mind, and see the principles working there, and how the consciousness of his divine nature and mission early developed itself. At the age of twelve years, a period which was regarded by the Jews as the

dividing line between childhood and youth, and when the regular study of the Mosaic law and religious doctrines was entered upon, the parents of Jesus took him to Jerusalem to attend the annual feast of the passover. At the close of the festival, on returning home, after having gone a day's journey, they missed the child, supposing, at first, that he was with some of his relatives in the company. It has been intimated, that it argued a want of care and affection on the part of these parents, to go a whole day's journey without absolutely knowing whether their child was with them. But the objection is very easily explained. The usual rate of travelling in the East, is about three miles an hour, and but six or eight hours are ordinarily employed in journeying, out of the twenty-four, so that a day's journey is only twenty or twenty-five miles. But the first day is an exception to this, as on that day it is customary to start late, and go only six or eight miles; and the company often encamp the first night within sight of the city they have left. The reason assigned for this, is, that an opportunity may be given, if any thing has been forgotten, to return to the city and obtain it. One distinguished

traveller says, "We set out from Aleppo at three in the afternoon, intending to make only a short stop that evening, in order to prove how well we were provided with necessaries for our journey. Our quarters this first night we took up at a place about one hour and a half west of Aleppo." Other travellers testify to the same custom. There is nothing, therefore, strange in the fact, that while making arrangements for the journey, and going so short a distance, the parents might have supposed that their son was with some of the company. In other journeys, his society may have been sought by those who were impressed with his innocence, his superior intelligence, his frank countenance, winning manners, warm affections, and instructive conversation. We are told, indeed, that as he grew up, he increased in favor with God and man. He was a perfect boy as well as a perfect man. Doubtless both Joseph and Mary thought of him on that first day or afternoon; but they thought of him as entertaining some circle of relatives or friends, with whom he had formed an acquaintance during the feast of the Passover, and who were now their travelling companions. We see how natural it would

be for others to put in their claims for the society of the lad in whom every lovely trait, and every virtue, shone so conspicuously. We all admire to see these qualities in a youth. Integrity, innocence, courtesy, benevolence, generosity, in a child, win our confidence and excite our admiration. They shine as gems of peculiar brilliancy in a character early developed. They give a charm to the whole countenance, — a lustre and intelligence to the eye, — a pleasing expression to every word, movement, and action. We cannot suppose that this was the first time that Jesus had been absent from his parents. He had now reached the age of twelve years, and was obviously far more mature than other lads of his age. He was capable, in a measure, of thinking and acting for himself. And although, as we have intimated, he abstained from any public manifestation of his eminent qualities and powers, yet he availed himself of private opportunities of usefulness.

As the shades of evening fell upon the white tents of the encamped travellers, the discovery is made that Jesus was not with the company. Inquiries were made for him, from tent to tent,

but he was nowhere to be found, — no one had seen the lad since they passed out of the gates of the city.

The parents, full of anxiety and fear, return to Jerusalem. They imagine, that perhaps he is lost in the crowd that fills the city, or has mistaken the way in the attempt to reach his home, or they fear that he may have been assaulted by some enemy. The cry at the dead of night, or at any time, "a child lost," is full of sorrow and bitterness even to the ear of a stranger. The thought of the little wanderer, far from his home, the anguish of the parents, the strong sympathy of neighbors and friends, the anxious searchings, all crowd upon the imagination. But how bitter the loss to these parents who had every thing that the heart could wish in their holy child; who could not be without intimations of his mysterious mission, and the importance of his life and instruction to the world. The day following their return to Jerusalem, is spent in most anxious searchings and inquiries for the lost one. Street after street and house after house are visited. The places of public resort are thoroughly examined, and it is not until the day following that the

child is found,—and where was he found? In the spot that above all others had strong attractions for his intellectual and ardent spirit.

In the temple there was an apartment which was used as a lecture-room by the teachers of the law; and where young persons were examined, and permitted to ask questions upon difficult points of doctrine. Here the holy child was found "sitting in the midst of the doctors; both hearing them and asking them questions." There is no intimation, as it has been sometimes represented, that he was disputing with the doctors, but every thing on his part seems to have been conducted with the greatest modesty and decorum. As these teachers occupied benches arranged in a semicircle, and rising one above another, he could very properly be said to be sitting in the midst of them, or sitting at their feet. And we are told that "all that heard him were astonished," or as the original Greek more literally signifies, "were filled with the greatest wonder and admiration," at his profound understanding and his skill in proposing and answering questions. His parents, too, on finding him here, were amazed: "And his mother said to him, Son, why hast thou

thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." And he replied, "Why did ye seek me? Did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business?" Were you not aware, too, that he would watch over and protect me?

From this incident we see beaming forth from the youthful Messiah the consciousness of his relations to the Father, and the great work which had been assigned to him. He felt that the temple, the sanctuary of the infinite Father was his appropriate place, the proper field for his earliest efforts, a fit arena for the first development of the boundless riches and spiritual treasures that were hidden in his soul. Since his arrival in the holy city, every thing that he had seen and heard must have excited his interest and stirred his intellectual activities. The remembrance of the long train of associations connected with its history, its kings, palaces, temple, worship; the degeneracy of an ancient and venerable system of faith, the ceremonies connected with the great festival, all must have impressed more or less deeply his youthful mind. With the doctrines of the Old Testament he was doubtless familiar, and his con-

versation with the doctors in the temple was calculated to call forth his hidden resources, and develop his views of divine truth. Nor should we wonder that the masters of Israel were amazed at the clear and profound knowledge, the evidences of consummate wisdom, the flashes of spiritual light that emanated from the lips of the child before them.

That there were many incidents in the history of this wonderful youth, of perhaps a similar character, and certainly of thrilling interest, we cannot question; although for wise purposes they have not been recorded. If at so early an age he must be about his Father's business, must not all his subsequent years have been devoted to this work? In this one utterance we have the principle of his life, the ruling purpose of his soul. And now he desires, in all the youth gathered in Christian communities, to multiply copies of himself; to have his virtues, his devotion to his Heavenly Father, his obedience to his parents, his holy life, lived over again. As his manhood, with its heavenly virtues and benevolent deeds, stands as an example to all men, so his childhood stands as an example to all the young. While it is true

that the sun of righteousness in the zenith of its glory shone in its splendor upon the human race, it is equally true that the first morning rays that with their freshness, and brightness, and beauty, gilded the hill-tops, were for the little children.

As infancy has the star of Bethlehem, to guide those who are thus early called away to the realms of glory, so childhood has the twilight of the morning, with its opening prospects of beauty and splendor; its fresh dews of divine grace; its varied and beautiful illustrations of the divine love; with the music of nature and the notes of the birds, to accompany the child's anthem of praise. And the end of all early Christian instruction is, to induce children to follow the holy child Jesus, to have his pure spirit, his lovely traits, his devotion to the service of his Father.

And do not children need the religion of Jesus? Do they not need it to enable them to perform aright the daily duties of life, to help them to bear their trials and disappointments? That they have their sorrows oppressive to the young heart, their keen disappointments, no one can for a moment question. We talk of the child's glee, his freedom from care and anxiety; but his little world is

far from being all sunshine. He has his days of darkness, his thwarted plans, his perplexities, that to his sensitive spirit are as much as the heavier trials of life to a maturer age. He is without judgment, without experience, without discipline. His youthful imagination is indeed full of bright visions of happiness. He will paint before him a world of beauty and pleasure, but how frequently is it only painting. Why, were it not for tears as an outlet to sorrow, I believe that many a little heart would break. Those in our Christian circles we can rank among the fortunate and happy. They have kind parents, a pleasant home, faithful and affectionate teachers. They have more done for them, for their comfort, their mental and moral culture, than any generation that has preceded them. But how many there are whom we meet in our daily walks who suffer from the extreme poverty, ignorance, or vice of their parents; whose young life is a perpetual sorrow; who have nothing that deserves the name of a home; whose only idea of parental government is gained through bitter words and blows; whose education consists of lessons of deceipt, fraud, and crime. The benevolent and lib-

eral do much for this class; much that is in the highest degree praiseworthy. But there is nothing that can work its way down and reach these unfortunate classes, but the principles of the holy child Jesus; nothing else can roll from the horizon of these sorrowful wanderers, the dark clouds that overshadow them. Nothing else can sweeten their bitter cup, can relieve their young spirits of their heavy burdens, can dry up their hot tears.

What is there so perfectly adapted to the wants of children and youth, as the life, sympathies, and teachings of Jesus? If it was emphatically true that unto the poor the gospel was preached, it was equally true that unto children the gospel was preached. The invitation "Suffer little children to come unto me," has a much wider meaning, than simply its local reference to those gathered about him.

It is an invitation sent out to all children of every clime, tongue, and generation, to come to Jesus, to accept his proffered gifts, to receive his blessing. Of all the systems of religions that have claimed the attention of men, none can compare with the gospel, in its attractions for this

class. These attractions and adaptations are so numerous, so obvious, so marked, that they carry with them proofs of the divine origin of this system, — proofs that the little child and the gospel came from the same source, the same heart of infinite love. As the sunlight, the beauties of the world's scenery, the song of the birds, the play of the rivulet, the anthem of the ocean waves, are all adapted to the eye and ear and imagination of the youth, so the gospel with its pure principles, its bright hopes, its stirring prospects, is adapted to the opening faculties of the soul.

Paganism casts children into the Ganges, and sacrifices them to idols. It blunts the natural instincts of the parental heart. Judaism confines instruction to the ancient oracles, the Mosaic law. It shuts the windows of the mind against the light from the cross, steels the heart against the sympathetic influences that flow from the holy child Jesus. Its schools are set back two thousand years, ignoring all progress, all the institutions of the Great Teacher, all the glories and hopes of Calvary.

Romanism prefers that children should grow up

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in ignorance and vice, rather than receive any education except such as passes through its hands. In countries where it is supreme, it has nothing that deserves the name of schools for the masses.

And in this country, had it the power as it has the will, it would cut off from its children the advantages that flow from our public instruction. The little of Christianity that remains in this system, reaches the children through corrupt channels, that take from it its purity and vitality. It is as though we should receive our Cochituate water through rotten logs and poisonous substances, that would render it injurious to health, and almost unfit for use.

But the pure gospel, to personify a system, takes children in its arms and blesses them. It blesses the intellect, the heart, the affections. It calls into exercise all the faculties, powers, and lofty aspirations of the soul. The very medium, the style, and imagery through which the truths of the gospel are communicated, are adapted to the youthful mind. Take the Sermon on the Mount, and there is music, simplicity, and beauty in the benedictions, that pour forth from the lips of the Saviour. The truths, important and sub-

lime enough for a God to utter, profound enough to engage the most cultivated and penetrating intellect, are yet simple enough for the humblest capacity! And then throughout all the teachings of the Saviour, there is so much imagery drawn from the various departments of nature, so many illustrations calculated to captivate the imagination and interest the heart, that the child cannot fail to be attracted towards them. The most successful books placed in the hands of children, those that they most greedily seek, are such as are most beautifully and abundantly illustrated. A single picture will often convey more than pages of written description. Now what is the New Testament but an illustrated copy of divine truth? What are the parables but beautiful pictures wrought by a divine artist? What child can fail to be touched by the story of the good Samaritan, by the incidents in the career of the prodigal son, by the contrast presented in the case of the ten virgins, in the case of the rich man and Lazarus? Those who have reached manhood, can all remember how these pictorial scenes became early interwoven with their thoughts, how each bore into the inmost recesses of the mind an im-

portant truth. The life, too, of Jesus from the rude manger to the glorious ascension, is one ever changing panorama of beauty, thrilling incidents, lights and shadows, representations of joys and hopes, fears, friendships, and treacheries. The angelic announcement of the miraculous birth, — the star in the east, — the visit of the wise man, — the flight into Egypt, — the entrance upon the public ministry, — the reception of the Saviour by various classes, his miracles, words of kindness, blessed doctrines, his arrest, mock trial, scenes of the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the final departure to his glorious home, all are calculated to impress, interest, and win the young. And the effect is seen in the large proportion of youth who rally around the standard of the cross.

Yes, I repeat it, Christianity is the children's religion, and they should all love it. For it creates for them happy Christian homes, kind parents, and the various domestic and social benefits by which they are surrounded. It creates for them Christian churches where they may be taught the way of life; where they may be led upward to the gates of the celestial and everlasting city.

It creates for them systems of education that will prepare them for the duties, responsibilities, and joys of life. It gives not only attractive virtues, but moral courage, strength of principle, and those elements of character that the interests of society, and the exigencies of our times demand. The youth who has in his heart the principles of the holy child Jesus, will in manhood manifest those qualities which shone so conspicuously in the public life of the Messiah; qualities as necessary now as they were at the period of our Saviour's advent. Christianity creates for them mansions in the skies. And to all children who love the holy Jesus, he says, "I go to prepare a place for you."

SONNET.

THE CHILDREN WHOM JESUS BLESSED.

HAPPY were they, the mothers, in whose sight
Ye grew, fair children! hallowed from that hour
By your Lord's blessing! surely thence a shower
Of heavenly beauty, a transmitted light
Hung on your brows and eyelids, meekly bright,
Through all the after years, which saw ye more

Lowly, yet still majestic, in the might,
The conscious glory of the Saviour's love!
And *honored be all childhood*, for the sake
Of that high love! Let reverential care
Watch to behold the immortal spirit wake,
And shield its first bloom from unholy air;
Owning, in each young suppliant glance, the sign
Of claims upon a heritage divine.

MRS. HEMANS.

THE CHILD READING THE BIBLE.

"A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle and waylay.
* * * * * *
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death."

WORDSWORTH.

I SAW him at his sport erewhile,
The bright, exulting boy,
Like summer's lightning came the smile
Of his young spirit's joy;
A flash that wheresoe'er it broke,
To life undreamt-of beauty woke.

His fair locks waved in sunny play.
By a clear fountain's side,

Where jewel-colored pebbles lay
  Beneath the shallow tide!
And pearly spray at times would meet
The glancing of his fairy feet.

He twined him wreaths of all spring flowers,
  Which drank that streamlet's dew;
He flung them o'er the wave in showers,
  Till, gazing, scarce I knew
Which seemed more pure, or bright, or wild,
The singing fount, or laughing child.

I saw once more that aspect bright —
  The boy's meek head was bowed
In silence o'er the Book of Light,
  And, like a golden cloud —
The still cloud of a pictured sky —
His locks drooped round it lovingly.

And if my heart had deemed him fair,
  When in the fountain glade,
A creature of the sky and air,
  Almost on wings he played;
Oh! how much holier beauty now
Lit the young human being's brow!

The being born to toil, to die,
  To break forth from the tomb,
Unto far nobler destiny
  Than waits the skylark's plume!

I saw him in that thoughtful hour,
Win the first knowledge of his dower.

The *soul*, the awakening *soul* I saw;
My watching eye could trace
The shadows of its new-born awe,
Sweeping o'er that fair face:
As o'er a flower might pass the shade
By some dread angel's pinion made!

The soul, the mother of deep fears,
Of high hopes infinite,
Of glorious dreams, mysterious tears,
Of sleepless inner sight:
Lovely, but solemn it arose,
Unfolding what no more might close.

The red-leaved tablets, undefiled,
As yet, by evil thought —
Oh! little dreamed the brooding child,
Of what within me wrought,
While *his* young heart first burned, and stirred,
And quivered to the eternal Word.

And reverently my spirit caught
The reverence of *his* gaze;
A sight with dew of blessing fraught
To hallow after-days;
To make the proud heart meekly wise,
By the sweet faith in those calm eyes.

It seem'd as if a temple rose
  Before me brightly there,
And in the depths of its repose
  My soul o'erflow'd with prayer,
Feeling a solemn presence nigh —
The power of infant sanctity!

O Jesus! mould my heart once more,
  By thy prevailing breath!
Teach me, Oh! teach me to adore
  E'en with that pure one's faith;
A faith, all made of love and light,
Childlike, and therefore full of might!

MRS. HEMANS.

VI.

ELEMENTS OF A HAPPY HOME.

BY REV. ANDREW L. STONE.

WHEN the Psalmist David rehearses the goodness of God to the children of men, not the least memorable or precious of those divine favors, in his view, is the constitution of the *family estate.* It is not only God that has made us social beings, and adapted us by his forming hand to the scenes of domestic life, — not merely his loving act that united the Eden pair and hallowed and blessed the first marriage, but the same good Providence, thoughtful for human comfort, that still girds and cheers the solitary heart with the ties and joys of home.

The family is in a higher and truer sense than *the State* a divine institution — the first model of the State — its government and law a miniature

of the paternal, patriarchal government of God. We cannot overrate the importance of this institution, the grandeur of this little community.

That which has ruined, that which has saved men, the most pestilent, the most conservative power wielded upon their morals and fortunes, is lodged in the influences of their homes. Cast upon the heart of a young man the spell, the golden fetters of a happy home, and there is no more puissant force of earth, to hold him back from vice and crime. Heap upon him the gloom and misrule of domestic anarchy and discomfort, and he will rush away into whatsoever riotous paths, to shake off this terrible incubus. There may be faithful and earnest preaching at church,— there may be youthful bands that link their praying cordon around the tempted,— there may be a public sentiment, largely imbued with the sanctities of a Christian faith, and yet with all these helps and constraints, he who is cursed with a cheerless, repulsive home, is almost surely lost to virtue and hope. This is strong language, but a thousand sad histories start up to justify it. One who is chained to such a type of domestic life, will get as far away from it as his chain will permit,—

will seek elsewhere the joys and pleasures denied him there, encircle himself with other bonds of companionship, sit down at hearthstones more genially lighted than his, grow reckless, because hopeless, about the domestic side of his personal character. The tendrils of the household affections, the clinging sympathies, the invested hopes that bind other hearts to duty and virtue, for the sake of those who love them, are shorn from him; what hinders that he give free course to his ready passions, and stride sullenly out of this domestic desolation, into the wild freedom of a life of sense and lust! It is therefore a question of no secondary moment, *What are some of the elements of a happy home, and how may we realize them in our own families?*

We take up this question with a family already constituted, breaking in upon it anywhere along the track of their history. It shall be a family complete in the various relations that describe its most comprehensive ideal, — husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters. Or if this limit somewhat the application of the subject, shutting out of its sphere the households whose integrity death has broken and marred, it shall be

a family where there is yet the *parental* and the *filial* relation, abiding in living union. How shall this family make to itself a happy home-history!

We do not go back with this family, to the evening of that wedlock that joined two hearts together, fellow-pilgrims for life. That is a foregone fact, whether wisely or unwisely concluded, out of the question now, at the stage of the history which our discussion takes up. It is, indeed, a momentous fact, and powerfully shapes all the developments of that history. If it were a hasty and ill-advised union, bringing together into such a close and sacred intimacy, spirits greatly uncongenial, and responsible thus for discordant elements already existing there in force and not easily harmonized, it is a serious, a tremendous obstacle to the realization of such a family state as we design to hold up; but the evil is not absolutely incurable, and the question we have asked, is nowhere of graver and more commanding interest than in this very case.

Let us begin with a negative or two.

First. *Not wealth and style.* We need no other argument here than that drawn from our common observation. Riches can claim no monopoly of

the warm affections of the heart. Wealth has no special power to braid around the spirits of the household, the fibres of a close, generous, and lively sympathy. The dwellers amid plenty are not those, necessarily, who draw nearest together and feel each other's kind and strong support. A parent is no more truly a parent, because his child is born to him in scenes of luxury and splendor. The child has no less a heart beating with filial love and gratitude, because the father who feeds him does it at the price of his daily toil. The conjugal relation is no less intimate and tender, because those who share it must lean together to be firm against the shocks of adversity. Within stately mansions there may be as well as elsewhere, causes of dissension and strife, jealousies, rivalries, and heart-burnings, — grief that drinketh up the spirit over wayward children, for whom gold has paved the path to vice, — many a life-long experience of splendid misery. Many such families, reduced to want, have felt that they never knew till that test revealed it, the worth and sweetness of domestic sympathy and love, — the blessed union of souls for the first time flowing together, and cemented together under the

pressure of these new trials. The flowers in the social as in the natural life, bloom in the quiet valleys, as prodigal of beauty and of fragrance, as on proud summits, — the violet "heart's-ease," is as sweet growing wild in the meadows, as amid the pride of decorated gardens.

Secondly. *Not polished manners.* We do not mean to undervalue any degree of external culture, especially in this connection, — that which regulates our intercourse with one another. We shall include by and by in the positive elements to be named, the basis of all genuine courtesy, all true politeness. But courtly etiquette in the family mansion is not identical with domestic harmony, and is no substitute for it. There may be stately morning greetings, and elaborate formalities at the dinner-table, and bows and compliments and flourishes, all perfect as exquisite training can make them; all, too, without the least touch of nature in them; all frigid as the ice of the poles. The ease of a well-bred manner, may simulate somewhat the freedom and frankness of an affectionate and confiding spirit, but it is not the same thing. Beneath it there may rankle wounded pride and betrayed affections, and burn the lurid

fires of domestic hate. Beneath it there may be veiled tyrannous passions, corrupt sentiments, and licentious habits. And, on the other hand, the communion of honest and pure hearts, loving and blessing one another, may express itself as fully and gracefully in homely and honest words, in the unaffected simplicity of straightforward declarations and demonstrations, and receive as choice and careful a nurture in such homely intercourse, as though in speech and manner it were altogether Parisian.

Thirdly. *Not the uninterrupted smiles of Providence.* If this were indispensable, there were no happy homes on earth. If this were actual, many of the tenderest scenes of the household history, that knit heart with heart, that open the deepest and purest fountains of feeling, that administer the most needful and the most healthful discipline of life, were just impossible.

First of all, then, the grandest element of such an earthly paradise is, that it be *a Christian home.* If the entire membership of the family be not in the strictest personal sense Christian, at least the reigning influences there that control the habits of the family, that characterize its history, that

give tone and law to its interchanges, must be Christian influences. God must be honored there, — approached, worshipped, confided in, as a father and friend. His hand must be seen and blessed in the daily bounty, — His watch and care entreated and enjoyed by night and by day, — God's word, with its perfect rules of living, its light in all perplexity, its comfort in all sorrow, its heritage of glory and peace revealed to faith, must make its varied utterances audible. The Lord's day, — the triumphal record of Christ's victory over death, commemorative of that Saviour's finished work, in whom alone the soul has hope of immortality, — must be there a hallowed day. The gracious mission of the Enlightener, the Sanctifier, the Comforter, must be recognized and welcomed.

Doubtless in homes whence this element is exiled, there may be family affection, cheerful smiles, mutual confidences, pleasures, and pastimes. But in every such home there is, after all, a broad and sombre shadow. However momentarily chased away, it ever returns and lifts its gloom between lamplight and firelight, and the soul. It follows each one to the chamber of re-

tirement; it enters with each into the cell of solitary thought; it drops its cold dews upon all the yearnings of natural affection; it drapes the future in night. There is an uneasy, restless conscience in each bosom, — a dull, aching sense, not always to be laid to sleep, that God is not the tutelar divinity of that home, — a fear of providences, lest they shall come to crush the idols of the heart, and to scourge its neglect of God. And that terminal point of all their pleasant fellowship, where each shall say adieu and step out into the darkness and be seen no more, is one they shudder to fix their eyes upon.

No, this is not the ideal of our happy home. What shall preserve the youth of that home from the snares of life? What shall lay the throbbing nerve of parental anxiety to rest? What shall the heart of the sick do for support, or the more sorely tried heart of the watcher? What solace in affliction, what hope in death?

But in the Christian home God's presence is a sun by day, a lamp by night. The dwellers there can look upon all possible calamities, with a reliant confidence in this sure word, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Each

heavy, pressing solicitude, is a burden laid down at Jesus' feet in believing prayer. By the pillow of the sick rises the soul's strong cry to the prayer-throne, and "*fear not*" drops the soft answer out of heaven. In the deep waters of trouble, the Lord's hand is near, as he walketh the waves to meet the sinking spirit. Together in their darkest hours whatsoever lights of earth grow dim, they lift their chant, "we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." They who dwell beneath this roof, if not themselves lovers of God, feel safer there because of the midnight camp of angels round about. They cannot so easily go forth from that threshold into the paths of excess, and when at length to any of them this home is only a memory, it is a memory that holds them fast to purity and virtue. These few hints of the power of this element must now suffice, as we have more yet to say.

There must be in this home a *spirit of household love.* It must keep itself fresh and young. It must think over all the endearing thoughts that first fed its ardor. It must add to these, as new

strands of strength, the later histories. It must guard against coldness, and all the occasions of it. It must rouse itself from all lethargies of indifference. The interest of the ties assumed, all their suggestions of tenderness, all that they properly imply of fervent attachment, must be often meditated. Never did vestals guard the fire on the altar with such sleepless and vigilant fidelity, as this sacred flame on the altar of the heart must be guarded.

This household affection must not be content with *existing*. It must express itself. It must use words that convey it. It must utter itself in the sincere language of action. There is a powerful reflex influence from every such demonstration upon the sentiment itself, cherishing and strengthening it. How beautiful, how lovely are these ovations continued down to old age; how they grace tremulous lips, and kindle on withered cheeks the bloom of youth! The example set by the heads of the family in this matter, sheds a happy contagion on all the circle; and that is a happy and attractive home because love is regent there, and pours its unclouded sunshine upon every face. Even Christian households may fail

in the warmth and brightness of this domestic love.

There must be also a *spirit of mutual forbearance.* Natural love and duty, Christian love and duty, both prompt to this. None in the circle are quite perfect. There are flaws enough in each character, if one will set out to pick them. There are infirmities of temper. There will be lowering and ominous moods. Each member there must call up his most loving patience when any of these clouds flit across the sky. If he lift up sharp points of irritation then, the nimble lightnings out of the cloud will leap to the attack; the thunders will peal their rattling volleys, and the storm gather way. We must not see all the changes that come upon the spirit of another; rather we must not seem to see. We must be blind, deaf, dumb to many an exhibition of character, that will retreat ashamed behind the scenes, if we give it a little space and trial unwatched for its evolutions. If we insist each that the other shall be faultless, how shall we ourselves meet the demand?

There must be again a *spirit of cheerfulness* there. Some truly pious families have succeeded but

poorly in attaching their younger members to the scenes of home because of the austerity, the settled, unbroken gravity which they habitually maintain. The parents conscientiously wish to guard their sons and daughters from the mere frivolities and vanities into which light-hearted youth plunges so eagerly; and so put on a more forbidding soberness than perhaps they are aware of. The direct religious influence sought to be exacted, is of a solemn, lugubrious cast,— sermons very sombre and sad colored. The effect is not happy. Religion comes thus to be looked upon something as the dark closet in which naughty children are shut up, a place of gloom and captivity rather than a sun-lighted chamber of joy and peace. The impatient captives are glad and eager to escape from such a chilling thrall, into the air and the open blue sky. Nothing should be so cheerful in that home as religion itself, in all its lessons and all its examples. It should be seen to promote cheerfulness in those that have the most of it, to brush all sourness from the face and temper, to pour the rippling light of smiles across the countenance, and key the tongue, not to a melancholy minor, but to strains of lightsome

music. Every thing in the home should be made to wear a cheerful, genial, warm look. A bright fire will keep a restless spirit in doors, when a dull, black stove will drive him out in search of something brighter. All the graceful art one can exercise in the style and disposition of furniture, however humble, to make the place of domestic gathering put on a welcoming, cheerful aspect, should be sedulously exercised. This place should be lighted well, if it may be, at nightfall, to drive the gloom out of its dingy corners, and make even the walls smile an invitation to the denizens to remain there and be happy.

The words that are spoken at meeting and parting, the salutations of the morning, the "good-night," should have a hearty, cordial, inspiriting tone, full of love and cheerfulness. Let it not be thought these are little things. The great cable that anchors a ship is twisted of finest fibres. The charm that binds a strong-willed youth to his home, has its hidden magic in just such infinitesimals of domestic life.

There must be a *spirit of order* in this home. Wholesome law, authority wise and firm, must regulate the internal machinery of this sphere.

The obedient child, even if his obedience has often to be enforced and corrected by the pressure of the family government upon him, is happier than the child who has his own way. The sway of this administration over him must be *even*, *impartial*, *steady*, not fitful, not impulsive, now lenient and facile, now screwed up to a despotic severity. It must rest always upon the authority of God, upon its right divinely commissioned, and be careful always to push its appeals hard upon the conscience. A well-ordered home, in which the hours of rising and resting, of toil and recreation, of worship and of whatsoever occupation, are wisely appointed, and steadfastly adhered to, will be a happier home, more influential, more restraining, more conservative and formative to good character, than one where chance is left to rule and dine at her own lawless shrines.

There must be a *spirit of honor* in this home. We mean that fine sense of justice which discerns with most delicate perception what each owes to each, and pays all its dues. There is no other stable basis for what is called politeness than this, no courtesy worth the naming or having, that is not founded in this. It teaches that each mem-

ber of the household, the humblest as well as the head, has his rights, his own *importance*, feelings and properties, that are to be held inviolable. It inculcates a nice observance of these rights, a respect for them, an acquiescence in them, that shall be mutual and unjudging. We know of a father who provided for each child a place of deposit for his own little store of treasures,—books, toys, and other valuables,—which was protected by rigid and inflexible law, law with its penalties, too, from all invasion by an alien hand. The same father ordained that the written papers of each, letters from other pens, lucubrations from their own, were to be regarded as sacred from all prying eyes, and any infractions of this law were dealt with in a way that dissuaded from a repetition of the offence. So there grew up in that home a code of honor which outlived childhood and formed manhood. We have heard of a father whose custom was, if he had himself inadvertently trespassed upon the personal rights or comforts or properties of a child, to offer amplest and sincerest apologies. The effect of this practice upon the children was most marked. It magnified in their regard that law of mutual respect, and made it

honorable. Instead of impairing the parental dignity it seemed always to heighten their reverence for it. Instead of inflating them with a sense of their self-importance, it cultivated in them a singular spirit of self-forgetfulness, and led them to copy the same carefulness of confession if they had infringed the rights of another. Here, as elsewhere, parental example is the most beautiful, impressive, and effective lesson to set before the pupil. You would have a gentle child, — be yourself gentle toward him, — you cannot scold him and storm him into gentleness. A tempest in the sky makes a tempest on the sea. Calm weather overhead gives a placid surface below, — just mirroring back the tranquillity above it. You would have a courteous group of sons and daughters. Be courteous and polite in your own intercourse with them, obeying practically the law you set up as their rule.

There must be *specific measures to entertain this home circle.* You will not have them go to the theatre or the billiard-room for their entertainment. You will not let them seek the revel and the dance. Then you must provide some substitute, — something that shall enliven and profit, amuse

and instruct. It may tax your time, your ingenuity, your patience and strength to do this. But the object is as well worth the cost as any for which you can make the outlay. Home must be pleasant to them. The chief attractions of life must centre there. Temptations of the baser sort will thus become comparatively harmless and powerless. Cheerful household games, in which you shall perhaps share, must enliven *one* hour. Narratives of interest out of stirring histories must fill another. Books that address the eye with pictures of a wholesome moral, must be provided for the juveniles,—and books that address mind and heart and fancy for those older, wholesome and healthful also. The parent must show that he enters into this effort to interest and entertain with all his heart,—that they are happy hours to him as well as to them,—that he appreciates their need and sympathizes with it. He must never grow old. He must be a child in these quick vibrant sensibilities, so long as there is a child beneath his roof. Many an absorbed and breathless hour may he hold the listeners fast to his lips with the morals of the Book of Books, till the stories of Isaac, and Joseph, and Moses,

and Samson, and David, and Goliah, of the child Jesus, and the crucifixion and the early martyrs, are familiar as household words. Music in the home must, if possible, lend its charm, — and evenings of pleasant social converse be permitted and encouraged.

He who opens such magazines of blessing at his own fireside for the beloved ones gathered there, who sheds the benign influences of Christianity upon them from their first cradled hours, who breathes and inculcates a spirit of domestic love, of forbearance toward infirmities, of cheerfulness, of order, of honor, and who busies himself to multiply in every way the attractiveness of the place and the scene, this man has mastered the chief elements of a happy home. He has secured thus not only present joys and comforts, but has woven for himself and his, cords and bands of strength that under God will save them all from the wrecks of this life, from perdition in that which is to come.

It is a most solemn and awful charge which he has undertaken, who opens and administers a home of his own. No other sphere of life lies so near the seminal beginnings of character, the

determinate forces of destiny. If any of these hints shall help and stimulate any soul in a mission so perilous and momentous, this our labor will not have been spent in vain.

THE LIGHT OF HOME.

BY MRS. HALE.

My boy, thou wilt dream the world is fair,
And thy spirit will sigh to roam;
And thou must go; but never, when there,
Forget the light of home.

Though pleasure may smile with a ray more bright,
It dazzles to lead astray;
Like the meteor's flash, 't will deepen the night,
When thou treadest the lonely way.

But the hearth of home has a constant flame,
And pure as vestal fire;
'T will burn, 't will burn, for ever the same,
For nature feeds the pyre.

The sea of ambition so tempest-tost,
And thy hopes may vanish like foam;
But when sails are shivered and rudder lost,
Then look to the light of home; —

And then, like a star through the midnight cloud,
Thou shalt see the beacon bright;
For never, till shining on thy shroud,
Can be quenched its holy light.

The sun of fame, 't will gild the name,
But the heart ne'er felt its ray;
And fashion's smiles, that rich ones claim,
Are but beams of a wintry day.

And how cold and dim those beams must be,
Should life's wretched wand'rer come;
But, my boy, when the world is dark to thee,
Then turn to the light of home.

THE TWO HOMES.

BY EMILY B. CARROLL.

I HAVE two homes, two happy homes,
By God, my Father, given;
One precious home is here on earth,
My other home is heaven.

I think upon my earthly home,
And sweet emotions rise;
Yet still my spirit longs to reach
My home above the skies.

The glories of my home above
Nor pen, nor tongue may tell,
For none, save spirits sanctified,
In that bright land may dwell.

Two babes, two darling babes are mine
In my dear earthly home,
I have one angel child on high
That beckons me to come.

Sickness and sorrow here on earth
Oppress the friends we love,
But joy and blessedness alone
Dwell in our home above.

Oh, glorious, blessed, heavenly home!
Thy glories who can tell?
Or half thy wondrous beauty paint,
Bright land where angels dwell?

My Father! hear my earnest prayer,
For thou I dearly love;
Oh, take us all, when life is o'er,
To our bright home above!

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VII.

THE RESURRECTION.

It must be admitted that the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, is one full of inexplicable difficulties to the human reason. When we see all the intricate and delicate machinery of this wondrous frame suddenly stopped; and the various organs of sight, hearing, taste, and touch, gradually yield up their life power, and become only so much inanimate matter; when we see decay invading that with which we have associated beauty, grace, strength, and health, and leaving of the symmetrical form only an unsightly skeleton and repulsive dust; when we view the earth as covered over with silent graves and crumbling tombs, and remember that time has effaced the very resting-places of uncounted millions, the inquiry will force itself upon the reason,

can these bodies rise again, and these forms appear again upon the stage of activity and conscious life? Does it fall within the bounds of possibility that these myriads of every generation, clime, class, and condition, shall be remembered and followed through all their solitary journeyings, and various changes, not a single one escaping the notice of him upon whom rests the care and the management of the affairs of this, to us, boundless universe? Will the sea give up its dead, and the battle fields return to life the millions whose dust has long mingled with the sods? Will every grave and tomb, the wide and pathless cities of the dead now underlying the cities of the living; the sands of the desert, the mountain cliffs, the quiet valley, and the extended plain, all be again animating with the life principle? Will this cold earth, that for so many ages has swung in its orbit, bearing the dust of countless generations, and up to this hour giving no signs of reanimation of one who has fallen, except in the few miraculous instances that felt the touch of the Redeemer's power, will, I say, this earth receive back to its surface, all the forgotten nations and kingdoms, and bear up a living, con-

scious, active multitude, as numerous as the present census of the dead?

Besides, it may be asked, what important ends can be subserved by disturbing the material, and what we term, the perishable part of man? Why should a being who by the word of his power can speak a universe of worlds and systems into being, can people the solitudes of limitless space with bright suns, and stars, follow the wandering dust of past generations, and depend upon that as the material out of which to frame immortal and glorious bodies fitted to a celestial sphere?

The unaided intellect of man as developed in ancient heathenism, and in the philosophy of Greece and Rome, entertained and cherished the belief in a future state of being. But its conception of the happiness of that state, involved the idea of a separation of the soul from the body. The body was regarded as the cause of suffering, the avenue of pain, disease, and death. It was looked upon as a gloomy prison, whose walls confined the expanding powers and lofty aspirations of the soul. Its passions and sordid desires, were regarded as so many chains that bound down the soul to a degraded service. In modern times,

deists and sceptics have united with Pagan philosophers in these views of the happiness of the future state.

But as in the case of some other important truths in our system of faith, we go to the book of Revelation for light upon this point. We enter upon no quarrel with the dictates of human reason, or the deductions of sound philosophy, or the teachings of science. In approaching the masters of spiritual knowledge, the inspired teachers of the human family, especially the Great Teacher, we bring our reason with us, that it may be satisfied. We bring our regard for the principles of philosophy and science, knowing that the same Infinite Being presides over every department of knowledge, and will see to it that truth is always, and everywhere, consistent with itself.

Among the earliest Jewish writers it is not easy to discover distinct traces of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Language is used by some, by Job and David, which has been quoted as proof of the doctrine. But other passages may be cited from these writers which show that they had no clear conceptions of it. The later prophets, however, give decisive intimations of a belief,

more or less general, among the Israelites, in the resurrection of the body. One of the clearest is the declaration of Daniel, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." At the period of the Saviour's advent it is clear that a belief in this doctrine prevailed generally among the Jews, although it was strongly opposed by the Sadducees; and some of the Pharisees entertained the opinion that the wicked would not rise again. The conversation with Christ in regard to the state of marriage in the resurrection, — the declaration of Martha respecting her brother, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day;" — and the assertion of St. Paul, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question," — are sufficient to show the state of public opinion, at that time, upon this question.

But it was reserved for the Great Teacher himself to establish this truth upon a firm and divine basis, and to throw upon it a flood of light, that would render it conspicuous among the fundamental articles of our religious faith. And when

we see the importance which Christ attached to the doctrine, the frequency with which he refers to it in his teachings, its intimate connection with his personal history, and our relations with his own resurrection from the dead, we cannot, as Christians, treat it slightly; nor, as some have done, argue away its substance, retaining the language as only giving a figurative representation of the doctrine of the future life. In those sacred and stirring utterances, "The hour is coming when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God;" "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first;" in the plain and unqualified declaration, "God both raised up the Lord Jesus, and will also raise up us, by his own power;" in the honest inquiry of St. Paul before Agrippa, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" — in the argument for our resurrection, based upon the fact of Christ's resurrection, in all these, I find something more than mere figures of speech. I find lurking somewhere in this language, a fact or truth which is properly

denominated the resurrection of the body. If all the various presentations and discussions and arguments, connected with this truth, can be turned to signify simply a spiritual resurrection, — if they are simply made to bear upon the doctrine of a future life already so extensively believed in by the heathen as well as by the Jews and Christians, then an equal liberty may be taken with the language relating to any other gospel truth.

We can account for the great stress laid upon the fact of Christ's resurrection, the anxiety to prove it, the great interests which the apostle is willing to stake upon it, only on the ground that it is a type and evidence of man's resurrection. What can be plainer than these words: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" that is, the body shall be reanimated, so that rewards and punishments may be received according to the deeds done in the body. Nor can we sympathize with those proud Greeks of Paul's day, and the modern sceptics who mock at the idea of the resurrection, on the ground that the body, the physical nature of man, is too worthless to receive

such attention from the Almighty. It is true, that it is corruptible, — that it has been defiled, defaced, — that it is the avenue of suffering, — that it is often weak and diseased, — that its appetites and passions make successful war upon its beauty, vigor, and life; but still St. Paul says to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" And again he says, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." The human body is not, therefore, a worthless thing, as many contend. Though fallen, it yet bears the marks of its divine origin, the traces of the skill, wisdom, and power of an Almighty architect. It is the residence of an immortal spirit; the medium through which that spirit communicates with the outer world, with the beautiful decorations of its earthly abode, with the stars above, with the page of knowledge, with history, poetry, science, and theology. A few ideas are innate, but how few compared with those that reach the mind through the senses. And if one sense is taken away, hearing or sight, how remarkable the increased power of the remaining senses, that they may do the work of the

whole! Had we still other organs opening into other departments of nature, communicating with the essence and occult laws of the objects around us; or were the powers of the organs already conferred greatly increased, so that the eye might reach the most distant, and detect the most minute object, without the aid of telescope or microscope; so that the ear might gather sounds not only from every part of the earth, but from distant worlds; we readily see how the range of mental effort and achievement might be greatly enlarged. It is true, that among men bearing a similar physical structure, and having the same organs, there are wide differences of character, attainment, and intellectual power; it is true that the mind is the sovereign, bearing the relations to the body that the infinite bears to the finite, the immortal bears to the mortal; it may be true that the mind is endowed with a ceaseless activity, that even when the body sleeps it is still awake; and yet it may be also true, that in the future life, as in this, the mind for its fullest exercises and highest development, will need something that at least approximates towards a material organization.

But there is something more in the language

of the apostle which adds to the value and dignity of the human body. It was erected as a temple of the living God. By the act of creation it was consecrated to worship. After it was built, the great Architect rested. The first morning sun that Adam beheld, shone upon a Sabbath. His first duty was adoration, his first exercise was praise. And we may readily suppose that among all the Deity's works, he delights most of all to enter that upon which his greatest power and skill have been expended, — that which bears his own image and likeness, — that which is most capable of worship. What are structures of wood or stone, what are mountain temples with all their grandeur and sublimity, what is even the costly and splendid temple of Solomon, compared with this temple! What are all the sacrifices upon Jewish altars, compared with the sacrifice of one broken and contrite heart! What was the Holy of holies which the high-priest so reverently entered, compared with a soul which God has made his abode, blessed with his sacred influences, and inspired with his Holy Spirit!

The Saviour while upon the earth is represented as knocking at the door of this temple,

anxious to be admitted, that he may purify it, rebuild its altars, and restore its worship. And now as our great High-Priest he is at the right hand of the Father, coöperating with him in the great work of rebuilding fallen temples, and making earth and heaven vocal with the praises of the Redeemer.

But dropping all imagery, and admitting the proposition that the Bible teaches the doctrine of the resurrection, the inquiry presents itself, what is the precise nature of this truth? "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" "No fact," says one writer, "in physiological science is better ascertained, than that the human body, in regard to its constituent particles, is in a state of constant flux. It is perpetually undergoing a process of waste and reparation. Strictly speaking, no man has the same body now that he had seven years ago, as it is in about this period that a complete change is held to take place in the bodily structure, by which we may be said to be corporeally renovated. This is a fact established by physiology, and the proof of it, we believe, is entirely beyond all doubt. . . . The question then again recurs, What body is to

be raised? A person who dies at the age of seventy has had ten different bodies. Which of these is to be the body of the resurrection? Is it the body of infancy, of childhood, of youth, of manhood, or of old age?" Besides, the dust of the departed body is scattered in every direction. It enters into new combinations, new existences. Millions of bodies have been by various causes removed from the graves and tombs in which they were once deposited. The mummy remains have been taken from the numerous cemeteries of Egypt, and consumed for fuel, or otherwise destroyed. Of thousands who have been swallowed up by the great deep, probably no visible traces now remain.

To all these difficulties and objections we have one answer, and that is in the language of an inspired apostle. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat or some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." Now the leading idea of this passage is, that as in the seed there is a germ from which the plant

springs, when a large portion of the seed has rotted in the earth, so there is in the body a germ, or a something, in some measure corresponding with this, from which will spring the resurrection body, and by which our identity will be preserved. Under this view it is not necessary that the particles of matter that constituted the departed and buried body, should enter into the constitution of the resurrection body. Indeed, the apostle, by affirming that the grain which is produced from the seed is not the very body that is sown, intimates that the body to be raised is not composed of the constituent elements or particles of the buried body. It is enough that the identity is preserved, as through all the changes in this life the identity of the human body is preserved. The adult or the aged man may say that he has the same body now that he had on the day of his birth, although the original particles may have all passed away. What this germ or life principle is that preserves this personal identity or sameness, amid all the material changes through which the body passes, we cannot accurately determine. Nor is it necessary to our argument that we should. The same God who by his

almighty power giveth to the grain a body as it hath pleased him, and every seed its own proper body or plant, is equally able to vivify the germ on which our personal identity depends, and cause this corruptible to put on incorruptible, and this mortal to put on immortality.

But what shall we say of the appearance and character of the risen body? That it will be essentially different from the human body of flesh and blood, and that we can form no adequate conceptions of its form, qualities, and capabilities, are propositions equally true. We have the general statement that Christ will change these bodies and fashion them like unto his glorious body. But we have also a more definite statement of the points of difference between the risen and the buried body. The first great fact announced is, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption." In this particular its nature must undergo a radical change. For what among the higher works of the Creator is more frail than the human body? With all the skill and wisdom expended upon it, with the various and complicated means adopted to protect it from danger and accident, with its natural power to endure

hardship, and resist disease; with its recuperative forces that are ready to act with promptness and vigor, its life is yet compared to a passing vapor, to a summer cloud, to a flower fresh and beautiful to-day, and to-morrow faded and fallen. The stars, the mountains, the hills and valleys and fields remain, but that which so absorbs our interest, and upon which so many desires centre, passes, like a shadow, away. The principle of dissolution is hid, as it were, in the heart, by the side of the life principle. The two seem almost to beat together. We can scarcely think of the latter without having the former suggested to the mind. Sit down and meditate upon life, its prospects, joys, possible achievements, its riches, honors, thrones of influence, seats of power, and if your thoughts are allowed to flow in a natural channel, they will end with the contemplation of death. Let a vivid imagination build the most beautiful and richly adorned castles of hope and joy that fancy ever produced; and after gazing for a few brief moments upon it, you will see the mists rising in the horizon, and the dark shadows obscuring its brilliancy, and the evidences rapidly accumulating that it is passing away. But beyond the grave,

in that other life, the fundamental characteristic principle of the body is just the opposite of that which characterizes it here. Permanency takes the place of change; incorruption rules in the place of corruption. No disease can invade the body. No accident can harm it. No exertions can exhaust it. It is proof against pain, against the ravages of time, against all those evils that here make war with its powers. It is imperishable as the everlasting throne, as the kingdom which it has entered, as the God it serves.

It is also sown in dishonor. That which is called the temple of the Holy Ghost, is in another connection called a vile body. He whose spirit was filled with the most glowing aspirations, who had consecrated body and soul to the service of his master, who was urged forward by the most stimulating and sublime motives that ever impelled a human being, could yet exclaim, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" Sown in dishonor! Dishonored by sin, by grovelling appetites and passions, by long courses of evil. Marred by grasping avarice, brutalized by lust, wasted by disease! But raised in glory! How shall we in-

terpret these words? We have as little conception of a glorious body, as we have of the glories of heaven. To the three favored disciples upon the mount of transfiguration there was given the view of a glorious body, when the face of the Saviour shone as the sun, and his raiment was white and brilliant as the light. But those who are familiar only with terrestrial objects, must rest content with vague hints, and faint conceptions of the reality. We can say but little more than that the glorious body will be in every particular, the direct opposite of the dishonored body that is deposited in the grave. Instead of the habiliments of sin, it will be clothed in the robes of righteousness. Instead of deformity, and features that repulse, it will bear the impress of the beauty of holiness. Instead of the grossness of a material organization, it will be ethereal as the light, and pure as the nature of an angel. Every organ, faculty, feature, and power will be radiant with heavenly splendor.

"It is sown in weakness." "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity." "He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." Man is

a strange compound of weakness and strength, of indecision and resolution, of effeminacy and energy. But old age and disease reveal his weakness and dependence. As he feels the tide of life fast ebbing, and the objects that have so interested and excited him here rapidly fading from his vision; as the limbs, once so active, gradually refuse to perform their office, and the brain grows dull, and the heart beats languidly, there is a deep consciousness that the body is sinking into the grave under the burden of its weakness.

But it shall be raised in power. At the summons of the last trumpet's peal, it will come forth clothed with strength, endowed with a divine energy. The glow of an unwonted vigor will pervade every limb, and organ, and faculty. No amount of effort will be followed by weariness. As though borne upon the wings of the morning, it will traverse the wide heavens, renewing, at every stage of the flight, its strength. Upon the loftiest heights of the spiritual Zion it will run and not be weary, it will walk and not faint.

"It is sown a natural body," a body with animal instincts, passions, and frailties; a body adapted to a material and earthly state of ex-

istence. It is raised a spiritual body, an ethereal essence, pure as the light, brilliant as the sun, destined to shine in another firmament, as the stars forever and ever. The precise nature of a spiritual body we cannot define. All we can do is, to hang around our conception of it, the most perfect images of beauty, purity, loveliness, and holiness that fall within the range of our knowledge. It is a body adapted to a spiritual existence, to the service of a spiritual Deity. No spot or blemish is upon it. No material clogs limit the bounds of its activity. No low desires or pursuits check its soaring and lofty aspirations. It is like Christ's glorious body, and when we behold that, we shall be able to interpret the language of the apostle.

Has not a kingdom, to be filled with such beings, strong attractions to the Christian? Shall he not lift his eyes from the material and the perishable and fix them upon the spiritual and the immortal? Shall he not listen to catch strains of the music that comes from those far-off regions? Shall he not open his heart to the influence of those thrilling motives and stirring appeals that come from the bright home of the righteous?

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him."

"IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?"

Job 14: 14.

How oft this eager question broke
From keenly suffering breasts of yore!
But from the grave no answer woke,
No answer from air, sea, or shore,
Save a dull murmur — *never more!*

Yet would the heart in vain protest,
Rebel against th' apparent doom;
While o'er it swept, in wild unrest,
In fire and desolating gloom,
Surging billows that consume, —

That waste the soul with fiery strife;
Till, choked with ashes and decay,
Like some sad, ruined altar, Life,
Lonely, forsaken, worthless, lay,
In dreary desolation lay.

But on this altar, bleak and bare,
A spark (which daily brighter grows)
Came down, in Judah's hallowed air!
Again with light the altar glows,
Upward a new-lit hope arose.

From Heaven it came, to Heaven aspires!
And Heaven invites the yearning soul;
Shows the Lost One of its desires,
Once hid in dust, in Christ made whole,
Has reached a high, immortal goal.

And with a soft, persuasive voice,
Lips, that seemed once forever sealed,
Bid him in Christian hopes rejoice;
And, in the truths by God revealed,
Find the tried heart's effectual shield.

Oh! when the precious treasured ones,
Are taken from our arms by Death —
Our own, our daughters and our sons!
They who were ours, with loving breath;
Are taken from our arms by Death —

By Death, the cruel and the stern,
In his drear, ghastly haunts to dwell!
How do we to our homes return?
As goaded prisoners to a cell!
A stony, empty, dreadful cell.

How *can* we live, and meekly bear
To see from earth, all brightness fade?
To Heaven we *must* address our prayer!
We *must* have more than mortal aid —
Oh, vain and helpless mortal aid!

The soul beseeches more than this!
Uplifts impassioned tones on high —
Which, reaching One who dwelt in bliss,
Brought him, responsive to that cry,
On earth to suffer and to die.

To die, to prove that Death is Life!
And thus from Heaven to win a ray;
Which shining on this scene of strife
Reveals the path to upper day,
Reveals the Life, the Truth, the Way.

O Thou! who art the living road,
In whom incarnate Truth we see, —
A perfect Man, a perfect God —
In Grief's despair we come to Thee!
To Thee, dear Christ! we come to *Thee.*

E. W. CLARK.

East Boston.

FAREWELL OF THE SOUL TO THE BODY.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

COMPANION dear, the hour draws nigh,
The sentence speeds — *to die, to die.*
So long in mystic union held,
So close with strong embrace compelled,
How canst thou bear the dread decree
That strikes thy clasping nerves from me?
To Him who on this mortal shore,
The same encircling vestment wore,
To him I look, to him I bend,
To him thy shuddering frame commend.
If I have ever caused thee pain,
The throbbing breast, the burning brain,
With cares and vigils turned thee pale,
And scorned thee when thy strength did fail,
Forgive, forgive! thy task doth cease,
Friend! lover! let us part in peace.
That thou didst sometimes check my force,
Or, trifling, stay mine upward course,
Or lure from heaven my wavering trust,
Or bow my drooping wing to dust,
I blame thee not; the strife is done;
I knew thou wert the weaker one,
The vase of earth, the trembling clod
Constrained to hold the breath of God.

Well hast thou in my service wrought;
Thy brow hath mirrored forth my thought;
To wear my smile thy life hath glowed,
Thy tear to speak my sorrows, flowed;
Thine ear hath borne me rich supplies
Of sweetly-varied melodies;
Thy hands my prompted deeds have done,
Thy feet upon my errands run.
Yes, thou hast marked my bidding well,
Faithful and true! farewell, farewell,
Go to thy rest. A quiet bed
Meek mother Earth with flowers shall spread,
Where I no more thy sleep may break
With fevered dream, nor rudely wake
Thy wearied eye.
O, quit thy hold,
For thou art faint, and chill, and cold,
And long thy gasp and groan of pain
Have bound me pitying in thy chain,
Though angels urge me hence to soar,
Where I shall share thine ills no more.
Yet we shall meet. To soothe thy pain
Remember, we shall meet again.
Quell with this hope the victor's sting,
And keep it as a signet ring,
When the dire worm shall pierce thy breast,
And nought but ashes mark thy rest;
When stars shall fall, and skies grow dark,
And proud suns quench their glowworm spark,

Keep thou that hope, to light thy gloom,
Till the last trumpet rends the tomb.
Then shalt thou glorious rise, and fair,
Nor spot, nor stain, nor wrinkle bear,
And I, with hovering wing elate,
The bursting of thy bonds shall wait,
And breathe the welcome of the sky —
"No more to part, no more to die,
Co-heir to immortality."

GOD'S-ACRE.

BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

I LIKE the ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
The burial-ground God's Acre! It is just;
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

God's Acre! Yes, that blessed name imparts
Comfort to those, who in the grave have sown
The seed that they had garnered in the hearts,
Their bread of life, alas! no more their own.

Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
In the sure faith that we shall rise again

At the great harvest, when th' archangel's blast
Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain —

Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom
In the fair garden of that second birth;
And each bright blossom mingle its perfume
With that of flowers, which never bloomed on earth.

With thy rude ploughshare, Death, turn up the sod,
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow;
This is the field and acre of our God —
This is the place where human harvests grow.

VIII.

THE SPIRITUAL GOOD OF THANKFULNESS.

BY REV. HENRY M. DEXTER.

THAT it is a graceful and grateful thing to render thanks for benefits received, lies upon the face of the subject. To state it, is to prove it. But when the Bible says, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord," it seems to go further, and declare that there is moral goodness in thankfulness to God. Many Scriptures invite us to consider the beneficial relations of such thankfulness to our spiritual life.

Thankfulness (literally, "of thanks-a-fulness") is the outward expression of an inward feeling, which takes the name of gratitude, and which it is difficult to define in any other way than by describing it, to say that it is the feeling which

naturally springs up within us toward one who has treated us kindly. It is an agreeable compound of an emotion and a desire; an emotion of good-will towards the benefactor, and a desire to make some return for his benefaction, or, where that is not possible, to do *something* to make him prosperous and happy.

Giving thanks is gratitude energized and expressed in speech and action, implying a reverent apprehension of the vast number and infinite worth of God's bestowments; faithful reflection upon them; a hearty emotion of pleasure in them, as being God's gifts, as well as being intrinsically of value to ourselves; a cordial desire to make some return to God for them, and a constant endeavor, since we cannot make any worthy direct return, to do something to please God with our bodies and spirits which are his.

Thankfulness, then, — using the word, as we shall do, to convey both the inward emotion and desire, and their outward expression in thoughts, and speech, and life, — is, obviously, one of the most comprehensive of Christian duties. As the key-stone of an arch involves each subordinate granite block in the curve on either side, and the

deep foundations on which the whole structure stands which it completes, so thankfulness, which, in some respects, we may rightly name the key-stone, completing the fair and full roundness of symmetric and consistent Christian character, involves attention, and appreciation, and regeneration, and sanctification. It cannot really and rightly *be* itself, without including them, at least to some extent.

This leads us to name as the first point in exposition of the topic before us, the fact that true thankfulness cannot exist but by the existence of Christian character.

This is true with regard to the subjective feeling of gratitude. If a chemist were to pour sulphuric acid upon limestone, and no effervescence should follow, he would at once distrust the strength of the acid, or the purity of the limestone. No reasoning could force him from the conviction that something wrong has vitiated his experiment, because he knows it to be a law of nature, that the action of that acid upon that mineral shall profusely disengage and throw off, carbonic acid gas. So it is a law of grace, that the descent of blessing upon a human soul shall

awaken gratitude. If such a result does not follow, we have no resource but to question the goodness of something involved. The blessing has descended from the hand of God; there is no doubt of that, for his mercies are new every morning and fresh every evening. The fault is not there. The law is inevitable and cannot fail. The fault must be in the heart itself. If it does not, so to speak, give off gratitude, when touched by benefits, it is because it works untruly; because it is blind to God's beauty, deaf to his voice of kindness, dead in trespasses and sins.

The absence of the feeling of gratitude, then, in any heart, — since there is no heart that is not every moment receiving benefactions from God which ought to awaken responsive emotion, — furnishes just the same proof that the character is not spiritually alive, which the absence of foliage and flowers and fruit from the boughs of a tree, exposed to the most genial and healthful influences of spring-time and summer, furnishes that it is dead. Gratitude is the flower that, with wondrous beauty and alluring fragrance, crowns the perfected stalk of Christian nature.

And if we turn from the feeling of gratitude to

the grateful activities which its presence prompts, we get a still clearer proof that it is a grace so Christian, that no real Christian can be without it. It is the great duty of regenerate men to regenerate their fellows,— to preach the gospel to every creature, — to sleep not as do others, but to be instant in season and out of season in every good work. These are the identical labors which true thankfulness involves, for if we are truly thankful to God for his bestowments, we shall long to make some return for them; and since no direct return is in our power, we shall desire to do *something* to please Him. But these daily duties, this manifoldness of pious activity which is concentrated in that one command, to preach His gospel to every creature, is just what we must do to please God, and manifest our thankfulness. So that the conclusion returns upon us with even more force from the absence of the objective labors which gratitude must prompt, than from the absence of the inward feeling itself, that the man who is not grateful is not a Christian. It is, therefore, a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, for the reason that he who gives them not, is not a good man.

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, because it is, in itself, a pleasant duty. "Praise ye the Lord," says David, "for the Lord is good: sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant." We know that some religious duties are, in their very nature, such as to involve self-denial and suffering, yet in the end even they are pleasant. The consciousness of duty faithfully performed, at the expense of whatever self-crucifixion, is one of the richest and most heavenlike of mortal experiences. But because some duties are bitter before they are sweet, it does not follow that bitterness is a necessary ingredient of righteousness. It is sometimes true that to fall in with the predilections of the heart, and to float calmly down the natural current of the soul, is to please God and keep his commandments. The duty of thankfulness, is none the less a duty because it falls in with the impulse of the pious nature. Said Isaac Barrows: "Other duties of devotion have something laborious in them, something disgustful to our sense. Prayer reminds us of our wants and imperfections; confession induces a sad remembrance of our misdeeds and bad deserts: but thanksgiving includes nothing uneasy or unpleas-

ant; nothing but the memory and sense of exceeding goodness." When we give ourselves up to its influence we may delight ourselves in the Lord, rejoicing in God, revelling in the blessed memories of his love, and eagerly asking, — "Lord, whither shall my willing feet run in the way of thy commandments, — what may I do for thee to relieve my joy-burdened spirit?"

Again it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, because it is a comely duty. "Praise ye the Lord," again says David, "for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is *comely*." It is of some consequence to have religion comely before the world. The impression produced upon the community by the sight of grateful and gratefully active Christians, is salutary. Everybody knows that such ought to be their character. And when any professed follower of God goes about the streets with a gloomy, sullen aspect, as if he never had been anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, — as if the poison of asps were under his lips, and his mouth full of bitterness, and destruction and misery were in his path, and the way of peace were to him unknown, it is too plain that he

is gone out of the way and become unprofitable, that he doeth no good — no, not any. Men may differ in calling him under-righteous or over-righteous, but they will unanimously despise him!

Sunshine is the great fertilizer of the natural world. Cold twilight, pale moonlight, dusk cloud-light, do not draw out the grass-blades and open the violet buds, and freshen and perfume the fields and glens and mountain slopes. These wait for warm sunshine. Its fervid embrace revives all nature and renews the face of the earth. And it is the genial sunshine of the gospel, — warmly raying out from the daily, grateful, affectionate, winsome, useful activities of the people of God, which must renew the face of the moral world. A grateful church will be the church of the millennium, feeling acutely the merciful kindness which has rescued it from the pit of destruction, and established its goings upon the rock Christ Jesus, and earnest to prove its love for the Saviour by making him known to every man for whom he died, that he may see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

"Honor the Lord with thy substance," is the divine precept. "Ye are bought with a price,"

says Paul, "therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's." There are many such commands, all going to show that God demands, and is well pleased with the grateful service of his people; that it is his will for them to recommend the religion they profess not only by quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, but by seeking to do good and communicate; to open wide their hearts toward the needy race, and be to its wretchedness and sin — for Christ's sake — in the place of Christ.

The farmer does not take his guest to see his unthankful orchard, that has no apples on its boughs, nor to look on his lean kine, that do no credit to his liberal bestowments of food, — but he takes him to the grateful, fertile field, where every ounce of enrichment has been returned a hundred-fold in the bending, burdened crop; this is the farming which pleases him and which is comely to look upon.

And our Lord taketh pleasure in large returns: he loveth a cheerful giver; — he will rebuke that evil servant who has been content to bury his talent in his own selfishness, though intending an exact return of what was given; — while he will

enrich with his heavenly welcome and eternal benediction, those who have been busy and gained other five, or ten, over what was received from him.

This leads us directly on to say, It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord; because thankfulness must furnish the strongest motive power for the performance of all that Christian duty and labor, which will convert the world.

Missionaries are thankful men. Mary Van Lennep wrote in her journal on the last Thanksgiving day which she ever spent in this country, these words: "I have been thinking all the morning of the innumerable mercies which crown my life. And now, in view of all my blessings, I come, and with grateful heart commit all my ways unto the Lord, fully persuaded that he will do all things rightly with regard to the future." And at New Year's she wrote: — "I am come nearer Christ, and feel his dying love more, and the preciousness of redemption. I thank God that it seems delightful to be engaged for Christ, and working in his vineyard wherever he appoints." It is just this grateful love for Christ, — this yearning to please him, and have his cause prosper because he is so lovely,

and has done so much for us, — that has sown the islands of the sea with gospel teachers, and has scattered the Bible and the tract in all strange languages through all strange lands.

A selfish, narrow-minded, icy-hearted Christian — if such an anomaly may exist — will never be a missionary, home or foreign. The ends of the earth may wait indefinitely to see the salvation of God, before he will trouble himself about them. The best locomotive that the most skilful machinist on earth can build, is nothing but a curious heap of cold brass and iron, until, by the antagonism of fire and water in its furnace and boiler, steam crowds its inward recesses, hisses at its safety-valves, roars impatient at the doors of its cylinders, shrieks at its whistle, and, like a demoniac spirit in prison, raves everywhere for release. And so the infinitely perfect machinery of grace, — which, by the foolishness of preaching, by churches, and Sabbath schools, and benevolent associations, and missions, home and foreign, and public enterprise, and private labor, and continual prayer, — all directed by sanctified intelligence, and overshadowed with heavenly influence, will by and by transform the desolate earth into more

than the Eden it has lost, — is powerless, except as it gets power from human affection and human volition. As the production of steam depends upon the proper expansive working of each infinitesimal globule of water when acted on by heat, in such a manner that the process would fail and the engine remain powerless without those globules were unanimous in their adherence to nature's law; so the power of the enginery of the gospel rests, in the last analysis, upon the individual faithfulness of individual saints. Humanly speaking, it has no power of its own, — all is aggregated from them, and every failure of any of them to act in consistence with the divine plan, robs the church of a moiety of her efficiency, and the world of a portion of its blessing.

Now, a moment's thought will make it clear that the feeling of thankfulness to God in individual Christian hearts, leading to the strong desire to please him and to have his will done on earth as it is in heaven, is the great energizing, power-giving principle, on which the church must rest in all her efforts, — for which the millennium waits. What can supply its place? The romance of religion may get on well a little while, in the poetry

of the effort, but it breaks down upon the prose, and retires disgusted from the solid hard work, which religion has to do among the degraded and repulsive elements of the lowest stratum of society. Christian principle, made active and kept unfaltering by the calm enthusiasm of thankful affection to God and Christ, is the only reliable energy for the constant prosecution of the Redeemer's work on earth.

> "In duties and in sufferings too,
> Thy path, my Lord, I'd trace;
> As thou hast done — so would I do,
> Depending on thy grace."

Read what John Howard wrote just at the outset of his noble career of self-denial and suffering. "O magnify the Lord, my soul and my spirit, rejoice in God my Saviour! His free grace, unbounded mercy, love unparalleled, goodness unlimited. And oh! this mercy, this love, this goodness, exerted for me! *Lord God, why me?* My soul, walk then with God; be faithful, hold on, hold out, and then — what words can utter!"

Is it strange, under the power of such thankfulness, to see him expending his life upon the

outcasts of society, — going down into the lowest depths of all wretchedness, ransacking the most fetid and fevered dungeons, exploring the most loathsome lazarettos, rousing society to the horrors it had slumbered over for ages, and bringing the mild light of the love of Jesus to shine through all grated windows, into all desolate dungeons? Is it not *natural* to read that he died in a strange land, infected with a fatal malady while on a mission of mercy, and that calmly lying down and composing his limbs to their long repose, he should meekly say, — while Europe was even then jubilant with his praises, — "Come, blessed Lord Jesus! It is well, lay me quietly in the earth, place a sundial over my grave, and let me be forgotten." No, no, it is not famine for fame that vitalizes such lives as his; it is the thankful memory of Jesus, and the eager desire to have his will done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Once more, — it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, because such thankfulness breathes the very spirit of heaven. Could we catch the syllables of those songs which they are singing there as we are toiling here, we should find that their melody is that of praise. They cast their

crowns at the feet of Him whose side bears still the scar of that cruel spear, — in whose hands abide the prints of the nails, — and, with a tumult of great joy, they ascribe blessing and glory and honor and power unto him who loved us, and gave himself for us. They do not praise themselves, though men remember them with profoundest veneration. They do not praise each other — though

> "There be the goodly fellowship of saints,
> The prophets taught of old,
> The blessed twelve apostles there,
> The leaders of Christ's fold.
> The martyrs' noble army there
> In glorious array,
> The holy virgins in white robes,
> All fairer than the day."

No! They praise Christ! Christ is the great thought of heaven! Heaven is heaven, because it is being with Christ. Thankfulness to him is the burden of every chant. It floats in all that celestial atmosphere. Selfishness is without, with dogs and sorcerers, and whatever is unclean.

When we are most thankful, then we come most nearly into communion with heaven. It

is good to be thankful unto God. It is good in itself, and in all that it begets. Alas, that we know so little of its quality by daily experience! At least, let us heartily say, with dear old George Herbert:—

"Wherefore I cry, and cry again;
And in no quiet can I be,
Till I a thankful heart obtain of thee.
Not thankful when it pleaseth me,
As if thy blessings had spare days,
But such a heart whose pulse may be THY praise!"

HYMN OF PRAISE.

BY MILMAN.

SING to the Lord; let harp and lute and voice,
Up to the expanding gates of heaven rejoice,
While the bright martyrs to their rest are borne;
Sing to the Lord! their blood-stained course is run,
And every head its diadem hath won,
Rich as the purple of the coming morn;
Sing the triumphant champions of their God,
While burn their mounting feet along their skyward road.

Sing to the Lord! it is not shed in vain,
The blood of martyrs! from its freshening rain
High springs the church, like some fount-shadowing palm;

The nations crowd beneath its branching shade,
Of its green leaves are kingly diadems made,
And wrapt within its deep imbosoming calm,
Earth sinks to slumber like the breezeless deep,
And war's tempestuous vultures fold their wings and sleep.

Sing to the Lord! no more the angels fly
Far in the bosom of the stainless sky
The sound of fierce licentious sacrifice,
From shrined alcove, and stately pedestal,
The marble gods in cumbrous ruin fall,
Headless in dust the awe of nations lies;
Jove's thunder crumbles in his mouldering hand,
And mute as sepulchres the hymnless temples stand.

Sing to the Lord! from damp prophetic cave,
No more the loose-haired sybils burst and rave,
Nor the pale augurs watch the wandering bird;
No more on hill or in the murky wood,
Mid frantic shout and dissonant music rude,
In human tones are wailing victims heard;
Nor fathers by the reeking altar-stone,
Count their dark beads t' escape their children's dying groan.

Sing to the Lord! no more the dead are laid
In cold despair beneath the cypress shade,
To sleep the eternal sleep that knows no morn;
There, eager still to burst death's brazen bands,
The angel of the resurrection stands,
While on its own immortal pinions borne,

Following the breaker of the imprisoning tomb,
Forth springs the exulting soul, and shakes away its gloom.

Sing to the Lord! the desert rocks break out,
And the thronged cities, in one gladdening shout,
The furthest shores by pilgrim step explored;
Spread all your wings, ye winds, and waft around,
Even to the starry cope's pale waning bound,
Earth's universe homage to the Lord;
Lift up thy head, imperial Capitol,
Proud on thy height, to see the bannered cross unroll.

Sing to the Lord! when time itself shall cease,
And final ruin's desolating peace
Enwrap this wide and restless world of man;
When the Judge rides upon the enthroning wind,
And o'er all generations of mankind
Eternal justice waves its winnowing fan;
To vast infinity's remotest space,
While ages run their everlasting race,
Shall all the beatific hosts prolong,
Wide as the glory of the Lamb, the Lamb's triumphant song.

PRAISE FOR AFFLICTIONS.

BY CAROLINE FRY.

For what shall I praise thee, my God and my King?
For what blessings the tribute of gratitude bring?
Shall I praise thee for pleasure, for health, or for ease?
For the spring of delight, and the sunshine of peace?

Shall I praise thee for flowers that bloom on my breast?
For joys in prospective, and pleasures possessed?
For the spirits that brightened my days of delight,
And the slumbers that sat on my pillow by night?

For this should I praise thee; but if only for this
I should leave half untold the donation of bliss:
I thank thee for sickness, for sorrow, for care,
For the thorns I have gathered, the anguish I bear; —

For nights of anxiety, watchings, and tears,
A present of pain, a prospective of fears:
I praise thee, I bless thee, my King and my God,
For the good and the evil thy hand hath bestowed.

The flowers more sweet, but their fragrance is flown;
They yielded no fruit; they are withered and gone:
The thorn it was poignant, but precious to me;
'T was the message of mercy — it led me to thee.

REJOICING IN HEAVEN.

BY MARY HOWITT.

O Spirit, freed from bondage
Rejoice, thy work is done!
The weary world is 'neath thy feet,
Thou brighter than the sun!

Awake, and breathe the living air
Of our celestial clime!
Awake to love that knows no change,
Thou who hast done with time!

Awake! lift up thy joyful eyes,—
See all heaven's host appears;
And be thou glad exceedingly,
Thou who hast done with tears!

Awake, ascend! thou art not now
With those of mortal birth;
The living God hath touched thy lips,
Thou who hast done with earth!

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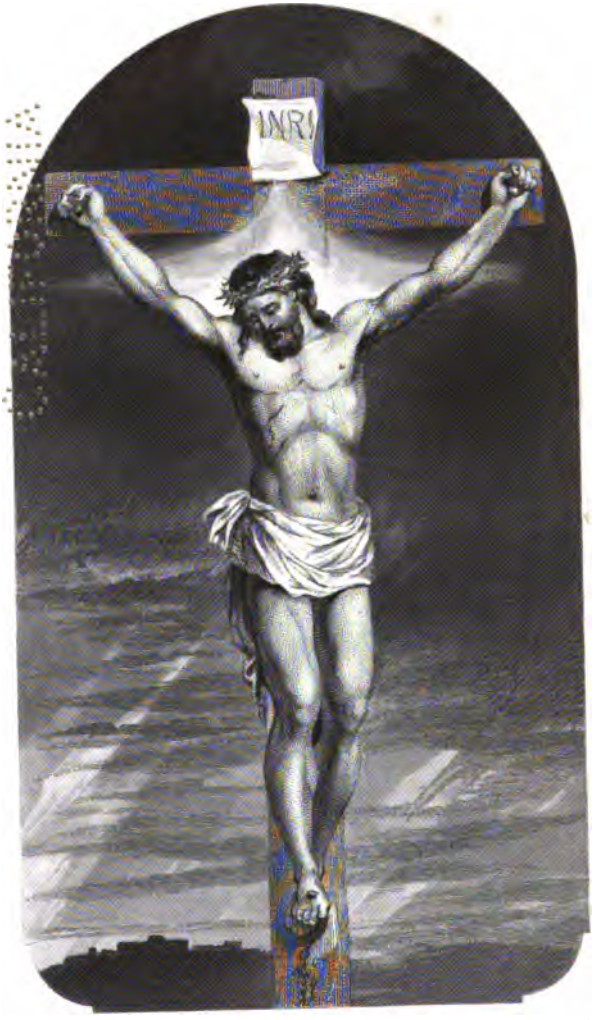

The Crucifixion.

IX

IX.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

THE decision of the populace in reference to the final disposition of the Lord of glory was condensed in this short utterance, "*Away with him; crucify him!*" Nor was it simply the verdict of an excited and enraged mob. The utterance expressed the opinion and the purpose of all classes in Judea, excepting one small, and at that time, insignificant class. The priesthood had spoken through Caiaphas, who, actuated by prejudice and passion rather than by justice, had hastily condemned the Messiah to death. The political authorities of the nation were heard through Pilate and Herod, whom a common act of wickedness had made friends. The prejudice, malice, and scorn of the inhabitants of Jerusalem found expression in the excited multitude who surrounded

the palace of Pilate. The sanhedrim could not execute their decision, because it was not lawful for that Jewish council to put any man to death. Pilate did not wish to execute it, for he doubtless looked upon Jesus as a religious enthusiast, innocent, though imprudent and visionary. Besides, he would gladly have disappointed and vexed the Jews, could he have done it with safety to his own person and to the office which he held. But the people, the maddened persecutors, intoxicated with malice, contempt, and rage, and urged on by the priesthood, were inexorable in their demands. To every proposition from Pilate they had but one reply, "Away with him, let him be crucified." The governor finds no fault in the man, but what is it to the crowd whether he is innocent or guilty? What do they care about the processes of law, the testimony of witnesses, or the just merits of the case? It is not in the nature of prejudice to take cognizance of principles. Passion does not pause to listen to argument. The spirit of persecution recognizes no code of ethics, no laws of right, human or divine.

Pilate, in order to appear to acknowledge the verdict of the sanhedrim, and yet save Jesus, pro-

poses to avail himself of the long-established custom of releasing a prisoner at the time of the feast. With the hope that the multitude would select Christ in spite of their enmity, he brings forward his name in connection with that of a notorious murderer, whose awful crimes had rendered him obnoxious to the whole community. And we may well suppose that the crowd, wicked and unreasonable as they were, would pause, and recoil before such a proposition. We may imagine their hesitation, the glances of one towards another, the indications of a disposition to consult, before expressing a preference. But soon the scale is turned. According to St. Matthew, "The chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas and destroy Jesus." These relentless persecutors felt the pressure of the crisis which they had now reached. They feared the issue of the proposition presented to the multitude. Although the people were inflamed with malice and passion, and bent upon the destruction of their victim, yet the chief priests and elders could not trust them to decide the question presented to them. Barabbas was so obnoxious, the danger to be apprehended from

his release was so apparent, the idea of selecting a notorious criminal in preference to a person in whom no fault could be found, was so revolting, that the priests feared, lest even unprincipled and enraged fanatics would be influenced by a sense of justice, or feelings of common decency. They therefore resort to persuasion, and induce the multitude to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.

Pilate, however, unwilling to resort to extreme measures, ordered Jesus to be scourged, hoping that the sight of his lacerated body would pacify the rage of the multitude. Bringing him before them, bearing the marks of excessive cruelty, and with the attire that the soldiers had put upon him in derision, he said, "Behold the man!" Just see the condition, the weakness, the innocence of the person who you say claims to be king, whose influence you so much dread. But the sight, instead of allaying their fury, only inflames it the more. With increased energy, with their fanatical rage wrought to a still higher pitch, with the voices of the chief priests heard above the others, they cry out, Crucify him, crucify him! At this stage of the proceedings the priests themselves had waxed bold. Not content with influencing

the people, they cry out themselves, Crucify him!

This event, the crucifixion of Christ, is the great fact in the world's history around which all other facts and events revolve, from which they receive their importance and their force. It is the radiating point of all spiritual light, the source of divine blessings, the pledge of the favor of heaven. It is the centre of the most conflicting elements and interests; of rejoicing and glory, of scorn and of triumph. It reveals the depth of human depravity, and the length, breadth, and height of the divine compassion. It tells what human wickedness can do, and what divine mercy can bear. Though a scene full of darkness and horror, yet it becomes the means of filling our moral firmament with stars of hope, of flooding the world with celestial light. It adds to the reality and solemnity of existence, increasing man's responsibility and duties, giving greater force to his relations to the Deity. While it brightens the pathway of the Christian, it adds to the darkness of the cloud of divine wrath that overhangs the sceptical and the vicious.

In dwelling upon the crucifixion, we propose to

consider the motives on the part of man which prompted it, the willingness of the sufferer to endure it, and the plans of Jehovah into which it enters as an essential and controlling element.

Those who decreed the crucifixion of Christ were actuated by various motives and various principles of human nature. There were local institutions and circumstances that influenced them, and yet they acted in a measure as the representatives of a large portion of the human race. That is, they acted as wicked men in any other age of the world, under circumstances somewhat similar, would have acted. Bitter hostility to the truth, to purity, to righteousness, was no new development of human depravity. It had existed in every age of the world, and it has continued to exist in every period since this conspicuous manifestation of it. The people of that day thought that those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem, and many in our day think that the inhabitants of Jerusalem who decreed the death of Christ were sinners above all others who now dwell in Christendom. But the ecclesiastical court that rendered the unjust verdict against Christ, the

mob who thirsted for his blood, the timeserving, worldly-minded, selfish rulers who consented to his death, all acted as the representatives of classes in society who are as permanent as human wickedness is permanent. The actors in this particular case have passed from the stage and gone to their reward, but their principles remain, and they will remain until the world is christianized, and society purged of corruption and hypocrisy. Between the depraved heart of man and the pure and heavenly truths which Christ taught, his stern virtue, uncompromising integrity, his benevolence that required man to love his neighbor as himself, his requisition that demanded an entire consecration of all our powers to the service of heaven, between these there could be no harmony. In their very nature they are antagonistic. Hence Christ had only to develop his principles, and simultaneously the opposition of the human heart was developed. Pride, selfishness, malice, revenge, all combined in rebellion against this heavenly system of truth, and gradually they reached the point where their intense and accumulated opposition found utterance in the cry, Let him be crucified. Nor are we sure, that, in any age of the

world since that period, Christ would escape crucifixion, or some other mode of persecution. It would be by no means difficult for human wickedness to find a Judas to betray him, councils to condemn him, a mob to spit upon and grossly insult him, and soldiers to execute him.

But this opposition and spirit of persecution were greatly stimulated by the religious prejudices and superstitions of the people. Christ had dealt with the formalism of the Pharisees, the scepticism of the Sadducees, and the infidelity of the times with an unsparing hand. He had stripped off the mask of hypocrisy, and laid bare the principles of the heart. He had shown that the religious customs, rites, and doctrines, about which the priests and elders felt so much pride, were only so many whited sepulchres, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. He uttered woes against these hypocritical deceivers of the people, that must have stung them to the heart. He kept back no truth from fear of giving offence, winked at no sin on the ground of expediency, compromised with no evil for the sake of a temporary peace. In this, as in every thing else, he made thorough work. As a natural consequence,

the formalists, sceptics, and builders of whited sepulchres were greatly enraged. They had not been accustomed to such plain dealing, or to having their sincerity or authority called in question. And to be confronted by a despised Nazarene, to have it publicly charged home upon them, that their long prayers were a mere pretence, their fasts a solemn mockery, their proselytes made twofold more the children of hell than themselves; to be publicly told that they were blind guides, that they devoured widows' houses, that while they paid tithe of mint, anise, and cumin, they omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; to be denounced as serpents a generation of vipers; to be asked directly, how can ye escape the damnation of hell,—all this was too much for these haughty and self-conceited formalists. Their hostility to the Messiah knew no bounds. Long before his crucifixion they would have had him destroyed, had they not feared the people. And when he was in their power, they would be satisfied with nothing, as we have seen, short of his death. The infamous wretch, Barabbas, was preferred to him.

In their course we see illustrated the power of

wickedness combined with a form or system of religion. There is probably no human force for evil more potent than that which results from this combination. Let a man's wickedness be sustained, and nourished by superstition; let its grappling-irons be fastened upon the conscience; let it remain for a long time undisturbed, and receive the sanction of a corrupt community, and it becomes a demon in will and in strength. This union furnishes us with the secret of the Popish hatred of the truth, — the spirit of persecution that has prevailed in the Papal church. We wonder how human beings could be guilty of such atrocious cruelties, such horrible barbarities, as Romish inquisitions have inflicted upon their writhing victims. But the force comes from infernal passions united with religious superstitions. In the State, no tyranny is to be dreaded like religious tyranny. Of all despotisms, it is the most inhuman, cruel, and deadly.

The Messiah knew human nature too well to expect any mercy from the hands of his pharisaical persecutors. Pilate and his associates were humane and just, compared with the high-priest Caiaphas, and those associated with him.

The next point of inquiry is, the state of the Messiah's mind during his arrest, trial, scourging, and crucifixion. Obviously had he not been a willing sufferer, no human or finite power could have forced him through these trials, insults, and agonies. His own ability to protect himself, in fact his limitless power had been established beyond all question, by the miracles which he wrought. He who could still the raging tempest by a word, who could give sight to the blind, health to the sick, who could call the dead to life, could easily thwart all the plans and purposes of his foes.

At the moment of his arrest, when Peter, so full of zeal, was ready to defend him with the sword, he asked, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" As though he had said, Are you not aware that instead of these twelve feeble, timid apostles, I might at once be surrounded and defended by unnumbered hosts of powerful spiritual beings?

When Pilate referred to his own power to crucify or to release the Messiah, how quickly Christ strives to convince him that he could have no

power against him, except it were given him from above. His ample ability, therefore, to resist, cannot admit of a question; but at no stage of his sufferings does he manifest the slightest disposition to use his power for his own defence. He willingly endures all that his malignant, cruel foes see fit to heap upon him.

But in analyzing his state of mind, we certainly shall find some deeper and more potent feeling, than simply willingness to suffer. Although while passing through these trying scenes, the words of Christ were few, yet there were mighty motives and strong emotions agitating his breast. He was much of the time silent, because his thoughts were too big for utterance. He had undertaken the momentous task of saving a lost world; of satisfying the demands of a violated law; of reconciling a wayward, guilty race to an offended Sovereign. He had undertaken to furnish those elements, forces, influences, that thrown into human nature would work it clear of its vices, that would purify and elevate it, that would make of the wrecks of human beings, children of the infinite Father, kings and priests unto God. And he was urged forward by the pressure of three

classes of motives severally relating to the condition of man, his own glory, and the will of the Father. The first finds expression in the declaration of the Saviour, that he "Came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." The second class of motives appears in the assertion, that "for the joy set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame." The third is unfolded in the inquiry, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" If we will carefully scrutinize these motives, we shall find them not only in harmony one with another, but dependent one upon another. It is an established law of the divine economy, that the highest happiness of which a moral being is capable, shall spring from the highest usefulness, and from perfect obedience to the divine will. And if we have one of these three classes of motives, the others will follow as a natural consequence. If I am a perfectly obedient subject of God's government, I shall, as a consequence, or as a part of this obedience, love my fellow men, and do all in my power to promote their welfare. I shall, too, as a consequence of these, secure my own highest happiness. If

my aim is to secure perfect happiness, I shall seek it through obedience to God and usefulness to man. It is a fundamental error for one to suppose that in order to act from pure benevolence, or supreme love to God, he must altogether forget or ignore his own happiness. According to the nature of mind as created by God, such a condition is not possible. No effort or labor of mine could render me indifferent to my own happiness. And what is true of a finite mind is true of the Infinite mind. The Deity finds his highest happiness and glory in blessing his creatures; and in calling upon us to obey and love him, he argues that we should do this because he first loved us, and gave his only Son to die for us. It is allowed that we are required to make sacrifices, to deny ourselves, and take up the cross and follow Christ; but every sacrifice contemplates the giving up of a present small advantage or gratification, for a greater future good. An increase of happiness is uniformly the result of the sacrifice.

Now Christ appears upon the theatre of human action with the sublime declaration upon his lips, "Lo I am come to do thy will, O God." We are afterwards informed, that "He gave himself for

us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Again, he is spoken of as the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame; all glorious motives; all harmonious with each other, and with the principles of holiness, benevolence, and love. He made, indeed, great sacrifices, but from them flow benefits that reach and bless all the parties concerned in the work of redemption. Not only is man saved from the curse of the law, and invited to participate in the joys of heaven, but because Christ humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name. And the fact that Christ is honored and glorified by means of the atoning sacrifice which he made, adds to its power to bless us; for it makes the interests of the saved and the Saviour identical. The higher the Christian rises in spirituality, in moral rectitude, in holiness of heart, the more is the Redeemer honored, and the greater will be his interest in the subject of renewing grace.

But there is still another party to the tragical scenes of the crucifixion. Although the agonizing cry went up from the sufferer, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" — although all the visible appearances indicated that the Son was abandoned by the Father; that the light of hope was fading from the horizon; that even nature was in its death struggles, yet what being in the universe was more deeply interested in what was transpiring, than the infinite Father? Did he not share in the love, the intense, unspeakable love that the Son felt for the human family? Did not this great scheme enter as fully into his divine plans and purposes? Did he not rejoice that there was a way of escape for his guilty children? that there was a prospect that the realms of glory would be peopled by the grateful, happy subjects of redeeming grace? In this great and glorious work we cannot separate the Father and the Son. Indeed, all the persons of the Trinity unite in it. We have here emphatically unity in trinity. There is unity of desire that man should be saved. There is unity of purpose that all the energies and resources of heaven shall be directed to this end. There is one thrill of joy at the completion

of the plan of salvation. God therefore is in it, in its conception, its execution, its application to the wants of man, in its effects and glorious fruits. It is, in fact, a revelation from the Father, revealing his compassion, his mercy, his anxiety that our characters should be based upon holiness, that our aspirations should reach his throne, that our hopes should rest in heaven, that our immortal nature should partake of the blessedness and glory of his everlasting kingdom. For this event after the fall of man, the world was continued in existence. For it a system of providential plans and dealings was set in motion, that for four thousand years operated upon the nations, — for it a particular people was selected, brought under the wings of the divine favor, had committed to them the oracles of God, were gathered in a royal city, permitted to worship in a temple doubly sacred by its consecration, and the permanent presence of Jehovah in the Holy of holies. In attestation of the reality of this event, this same people are now scattered among the nations, oppressed, despised, fulfilling the cry of the infuriated mob around the person of Jesus, "His blood be on us and on our children."

As an element in the divine purposes in regard to our race, the mission of Jesus stands out as the most conspicuous and the most potent. It constituted a new era in the world's history. From it sprang a new form of civilization that penetrated the nations with an invisible but resistless energy; that threw out on every hand principles of right, justice, freedom; that stimulated literature, promoted the arts, advanced science, and every form of human improvement. Select what modern enterprise you please that is benefiting man in his temporal, social, or political interests, and strike down through the surface to its hidden sources, and you will find that the undercurrent that bears up all, and urges forward all with a resistless energy, is the divine life and achievements of the Lord of glory. Select any conspicuous Christian virtue that has shone with lustre amid the dark vices of human depravity; any wonderful triumph of truth over error, liberty over despotism, humanity over cruelty and oppression; select any great civil or religious revolution that has emancipated the human intellect, stimulated thought, opened the prizes of life to all classes, given birth to institutions that are blessing all the

interests and relations of society, and you can trace its vital power to the cross of Calvary.

Look abroad at this moment over the face of the earth, and tell me if there is another agency at work that can compare in importance with this, that is moving the nations with a mightier impulse, that is more thoroughly arousing them from the slumber of ages. Look above at the moral administration of Jehovah, and tell me if the atoning sacrifice of Christ does not enter into that government as a controlling force, opening the channels of mercy, and rendering it consistent for the great Judge to be just, and yet justify them that believe.

Most appropriately do we designate the Messiah as the sun of righteousness, for he fills the earth with light and the heavens with glory. The stars are no longer needed, for the night of the earth is passing away. Joy and gladness are filling the valley, plains, cities, and nations. All Christian institutions, philanthropic enterprises, great discoveries, literature, science, art, unite in one song of thanksgiving that is growing louder and louder, and is swelling with the triumphant march of the gospel, that is echoed from the islands of the sea

and the distant continents, and will one day roll around the globe, and carry to the everlasting throne the tidings, that the kingdoms of the earth have become the kingdoms of our Lord.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

City of God! Jerusalem,
Why rushes out thy living stream?
The turbaned priest, the hoary seer,
The Roman in his pride, are here;
And thousands, tens of thousands, still
Cluster round Calvary's wild hill.

Still onward rolls the living tide,
There rush the bridegroom and the bride;
Prince, beggar, soldier, Pharisee,
The old, the young, the bond, the free;
The nation's furious multitude,
All maddening with the cry of blood.

'T is glorious morn; from height to height
Shoot the keen arrows of the light;
And glorious in their central shower,
Palace of holiness and power,
The temple on Moriah's brow,
Looks a new risen sun below.

But wo to hill, and wo to vale!
Against them shall come forth a wail:
And wo to bridegroom and to bride!
For death shall on the whirlwind ride;
And wo to thee, resplendent shrine,
The sword is out for thee and thine!

Hide, hide thee in the heavens, thou sun,
Before the deed of blood is done!
Upon that temple's haughty steep,
Jerusalem's last angels weep:
They see destruction's funeral pall
Blackening o'er Sion's sacred wall.

Still pours along the multitude,
Still rends the heavens the shout of blood;
But on the murderers' furious van
Who totters on? A weary man;
A cross upon his shoulders bound,
His brow, his frame, one gushing wound.

And now he treads on Calvary,
What slave upon that hill must die?
What hand, what heart in guilt imbued,
Must be the mountain vulture's food?
There stand two victims, gaunt and bare,
Two culprits, emblems of despair.

Yet who the third? The yell of shame
Is frenzied at the sufferer's name;

Hands clenched, teeth gnashing, vestures torn,
The curse, the taunt, the laugh of scorn,
All that the dying hour can sting,
Are round thee now, thou thorn-crowned king.

Yet cursed, and tortured, taunted, spurned,
No wrath is for the wrath returned,
No vengeance flashes from the eye,
The sufferer calmly waits to die;
The sceptre reed, the thorny crown,
Wake on that pallid brow no frown.

At last the word of death is given,
The form is bound, the nails are driven;
Now triumph, Scribe and Pharisee!
Now, Roman, bend the mocking knee!
The cross is reared. The deed is done,
There stands Messiah's earthly throne!

This was the earth's consummate hour!
For this had blazed the prophet's power;
For this had swept the conqueror's sword,
Had ravaged, raised, cast down, restored;
Persepolis, Rome, Babylon,
For this ye sank, for this ye shone.

Yet things to which earth's brightest beam
Were darkness, earth itself a dream,
Foreheads on which shall crowns be laid,
Sublime when sun and star shall fade;

Worlds upon worlds, eternal things,
Hung on thy anguish, King of kings!

Still from his lip no curse has come,
His lofty eye has looked no doom;
No earthquake burst, no angel brand
Crushes the black, blaspheming band:
What say those lips by anguish riven?
"God, be my murderers forgiven!"

He dies, in whose high victory
The slayer, Death, himself shall die.
He dies; by whose all-conquering tread
Shall yet be crushed the serpent's head;
From his proud throne to darkness hurled,
The god and tempter of this world.

He dies creation's awful Lord,
Jehovah, Christ, Eternal Word!
To come in thunder from the skies;
To bid the buried world arise;
The earth his footstool, heaven his throne;
Redeemer! may thy will be done.

CROLY.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

I ASKED the heavens, "What foes to God had done
This unexampled deed?" The heavens exclaimed,
"'T was man, and we in horror snatched the sun
From such a spectacle of guilt and shame."
I asked the sea; the sea in fury boiled,
And answered with his voice of storms, "'T was man;
My waves in panic at his crime recoiled,
Disclosed the abyss, and from the centre ran."
I asked the earth; the earth replied, aghast,
"'T was man; and such strange pangs my bosom rent,
That still I groan and shudder at the past."
— To man, gay, smiling, thoughtless man, I went,
And asked him next; — he turned a scornful eye,
Shook his proud head, and deigned me no reply.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

X.

THE WANING NIGHT AND COMING DAY.

BY REV. WILLIAM S. STUDLEY.

It may be truthfully said of all those who have entered upon the Christian life, that their "night is far spent." Although a man, in accepting the salvation wrought out by Christ does, by virtue of the act, enter upon a state of comparative blessedness, having his feet taken from a horrible pit and placed upon a spiritual rock, with the additional blessings imparted to him of peace, and joy, and hope; yet this blessedness is only comparative; the full fruition of Christianity's blessings is in the life to come. However much of blessing the Christian may be enabled to experience in this life, however deep his joy, however peaceful his heart, however bright his hopes, he

must feel, at times, the shackles of sin and ignorance; the night of temptation, and trial, and suffering; and although the Christian may be well apprised of this, yet in view of his knowledge that time is short, and that he will soon stand in the presence of Christ, he is entitled to rejoice; for in *his* presence there is no more night to the soul.

That is a very narrow view of Christianity which leads men to suppose that the blessings which it dispenses in this life, are the greatest gifts which it can possibly bestow. However, there is too much of night about our hearts to enable us to see the full value, or inherit the richest bestowments of Christianity. We have reason to believe from the declarations of Christ, and the promises of his gospel, that this life, with all the blessings which our souls, as at present constituted, can possibly contain, is nothing to be compared with the life that shall hereafter be revealed in the experience of the Christian believer. We understand, from the teachings of Scripture, that man's best estate upon earth is vanity; that clouds and darkness are continually obstructing man's perceptions of Jehovah; that there is a law in man's members which is warring continually against the law of

his mind when it seeks to be Christlike; that man is born to suffering, that he is of few days and full of trouble. These declarations are applicable to the Christian as well as to the unbeliever. We are all doomed, by the natural condition of things within and without, to experience discomforts and sorrows; but to those who put on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible opens up a blessed assurance that when life terminates, their souls enter upon such a state of being as is free from all earthly shackles and besetments; so that there is really no time in the Christian's life when he may not rejoice in the assurance that his night is far spent; for however prolonged his life may be, its longest term is so very brief, that he is constantly standing upon the threshold of heaven. We are taught by Revelation that in the land of the blest "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain;" and, furthermore, we are taught, for our special encouragement and blessing, that "there shall be no night there;" hence we may justly conclude that the Christian, in view of the nearness of heaven, is always in that position which permits him to exclaim, truthfully, "The day is at hand."

There are many periods in the Christian's experience, that are rightly typified by night; and as these seasons never recur to a soul that has once entered through the pearly gates, the believer is specially privileged to rejoice in prospect of his speedy deliverance. One element of spiritual night to the believer springs from his excessive *ignorance*. To understand this we have only to remark, that although entrance upon the Christian life does tend to implant in the mind more extended desires for knowledge than were previously experienced, yet the Christian, like the unbeliever, is dependent upon unceasing efforts to secure to himself even the most insignificant fruits of wisdom. To illustrate his ignorance,— let him come out on a summer night, and see the stars twinkling in the heavens; he may tell you the names with which men designate them, and their distance from the earth; but question him never so much, and you can obtain no certain knowledge whether or not the stars are peopled worlds. Turn to the little flower that grows at his feet; ask him how it obtains vitality and sweetness from the cold, damp earth, and he is dumb; he gives you not a word. Take a simple forest

leaf; direct his notice to its peculiar form and fibres, — ask him why it invariably assumes its individual shape and characteristics; ask him why the foliage of the oak is always distinguishable from the foliage of the ash, and the willow from the fir, — he can only say that it *is* so, — he fails to answer *why;* and if he fails in regard to knowledge of such seemingly unimportant earthly matters, how deeply ignorant must he be of the things that are heavenly! If the things that are seen and temporal are so full of mystery, what does he or can he know of the things that are unseen and eternal? The faith of the Christian insures to him the comforting hope, that there is an eternal rest remaining for the righteous; but he can tell no more than the worldling, whether the final home of the redeemed is to be a glorious city, with beautiful foundations, or simply a spiritual state. He reads that there exists a mysterious Trinity in unity, but he can neither tell nor see how this is possible. He reads of glorified spirits, but he has no fixed or definite conception of their nature or their blessedness. He has heard of angels that excel in strength, but he cannot comprehend the power of an angel. He does not

know by what unseen bonds of sympathy God and man are related. He cannot tell how it is that the Holy Ghost does its office upon human souls. He does not understand the connection that exists between salvation and faith. He feels within himself a divine impulse, and, for want of a better term, he calls it conscience; but question him closely concerning its location, and he can answer nothing. He reads that there shall be a resurrection of the dead; he sees no trace of those who died long centuries since, and though he believes the declaration, yet he can by no means point out its method of fulfilment. His soul may be full of faith, his heart may overflow with joy; yet in that very hour he is ignorant of the true nature of every thing eternal. The divine essence, the holy trinity, the angel brotherhood, every thing beyond time's boundaries, save the fact of judgment and immortality, is sealed to his inquiring mind. He thirsts for some certain knowledge of eternal things; he groans to be delivered from his thraldom of ignorance; but when his friends endeavor to fathom the eternal mysteries, he feels that they only "darken counsel by words without knowledge."

Such is the earthly condition of man, and such must it ever be. But to the Christian, there is a power of comfort in the fact that life is short, and that when he passes the dark river of division between eternity and time, all this ignorance which now hangs about his spirit will be removed. Light shall descend into the depths of his soul. Then shall he know even as he is known. Then he shall see face to face. The mysteries of redemption will be made as clear as the consciousness of his own existence. The divine character will be perfectly disclosed. The clouds and darkness that are now about Jehovah, will be dissipated by the powerful sunlight of eternity. Mingling with the angels, he shall become as one of them, comprehending their life, excelling in strength, joyful in praises. The *method* of man's resurrection will be perfectly clear to a soul that has passed beyond the eternal battlements. All those mysterious workings of the soul which so baffle the human understanding now, will be laid bare to his perceptions. When the soul passes away to the companionship of its Redeemer, it enters into a full conception and consciousness of truth.

Christian reader, as we have this assurance set before us, do we experience no kindlings of joy? As we are assured of the successful termination of our struggles and conflicts for wisdom, do we experience no deep emotions of pleasure? Think how near we stand to eternity, — only the brief remnant of this earthly pilgrimage between our spirits and the full noonday of truth. As we see the shadows of life passing away more and more rapidly, and behold the coming on of eternity with its enlightening beams, O let the assurances of the gospel be to us a signal of hope, and let us rejoice abundantly in the thought, that in our experience the night of ignorance is far spent, and the day of truth is at hand.

Another element of spiritual night in the experience of a Christian arises from *temptation*. Whichever way man, and especially a believer in Christianity, turns, he is exposed to great temptations. They beset him on every side. He is like *Bunyan's* pilgrim passing through the dark valley, — "when he sought to shun the ditch on the one hand, he was ready to fall over into the mire on the other; and when he sought to escape the mire, without great carefulness, he was ready

to fall into the ditch." He is exposed to the enticement of his own evil propensities. He is not only liable to actual transgression, by obeying his own unchristianized affections, but he is constantly beset with false doctrines, that are awfully destructive in their operations upon the soul. He is always exposed to the seductive influences of Satan, robed as an angel of light. As far as the curse of sin is found, so far extends man's liability to be tempted. On all the earth, far out at sea, in public and retirement, everywhere and always, is the soul of man exposed to the machinations of evil. How deeply does this fact enter into the experience of the Christian believer. How his heart trembles when he looks at the pitfalls to which he is constantly exposed, and then regards his own exceeding frailty. He needs all the incitements of an earnest faith, a wellgrounded assurance, and even then he fears lest he at last become a castaway.

But the gospel of Christ holds out ample encouragement to such. It says to the trembling believer, Fear not, but hold fast your integrity. Your pilgrimage is wellnigh ended. Your season of temptation is almost past. The hour of your

deliverance is near. Cast your eyes upward. Look at the land of safety lying just beyond the stream of death. That land is your inheritance. There abideth everlasting spring. There the wicked cease from troubling. There the power of temptation will be broken. Look again. See how near your present dwelling lies to that blessed country, — *all* yours by the gift of Christ. Be not dismayed, then, at the wiles of Satan. Hold fast your confidence a little season longer, for the night of temptation is far spent, and the day of deliverance is near.

Another element of spiritual night lies in the severe *trials* to which the Christian believer is subjected. Although lasting good results from that experience which is as wormwood to the Christian's heart, yet the process of the trial is naturally creative of gloom. Take him in the hour when his faith is assailed by the powers of evil; when he loses sight, for a moment, of the efficacy of Christ; when shadows envelop his soul, so that he can in no manner understand his own spiritual condition; take the Christian in such a season, — look into his mind, — see what suffering is his. And these seasons are not unfrequent in

the Christian's experience. At such times his faith is so weak that, instead of seeing the probability of Christianity's prevalence in all the earth, he even staggers in despair of its prevalence in his own heart.

Then there are trials of patience, when the soul is so wrought upon by external circumstances, as to awaken all its propensities to the indulgence of passion. To these the Christian is subject in common with other men. Business perplexities, household cares, social anxieties, all tend to darken the view of the believer. In their presence, at times, he feels himself surrounded by night, — encompassed with thick clouds which hide from him the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the face of his Redeemer. This is a common experience of the believer. These clouds of trial will gather about him; these seasons of darkness will overtake him; this night of anxiety is sure to come.

But there is a blessing in the thought that this night of trial is only for a season; it does not go on for ever. Very soon the morning light of a peaceful heaven will send its joyous beams into the believer's soul, and from that hour there shall be no further trial or besetment. Very soon the

mists and fogs of night will all be dissipated by the sunshine of an endless day. Even now, that day is near at hand. The night is already far spent. Up the eastern sky of every Christian believer's experience, come the tokens of a rising light. Soon, very soon, we are to stand upon that shore, where night, and storm, and darkness, shall have ceased for ever. Let us suffer the thought to pervade our hearts, and send its strength through all the avenues of our consciousness, that the night of trial is far spent, and the day of releasement is at hand.

But a more universal and far deeper source of darkness to the believer's soul, is that which arises from *affliction*. Upon some Christian hearts, ordinary temptations, customary trials, seem to sit lightly. At times, it would almost seem that they were completely free from these elements of darkness. Doubts appear to be absent. In the midst of temptations they seem to go conscious of safety. They scarcely recognize the trials that annoy the multitude. But even *they* are called to the experience of afflictions. From the darkness of sorrow no man is exempt. It comes alike to the parent and child; the rich and the poor; the beg-

gar and the king. The mother is called to part with her cherished infant. The father weeps over his prostrate son. The husband is torn from his bride. The wife is removed from her beloved. Children are left to the bitter woes of orphanage. No man or class of men comes to the grave without passing through this night of bereavement and distress. Anguish is man's chief earthly inheritance. That crowded graveyard is significant of sorrow. That passing bell is a telltale of calamity. These numerous weeds are indicative of grief. Hospitals, insane retreats, blind asylums, orphan homes, all confirm the thought that man is full of trouble. His whole life seems to be a constant exposure to suffering. Dear ones are snatched from his side and borne away to the sepulchre, and his fondest hopes are blighted by the touch of woe. Answer ye who read these pages, — look over your past years and answer, — have you not passed through bitter waters? Have you not experienced many heart calamities? Has not your life, as it were, a night of fearful dreams? We go to the dwelling of affluence and ask for a chapter from its owner's history, and on the record we read many a tale

of suffering. We enter the home of poverty to find that calamity has been there before us, and left some heart all bleeding. Whichever way we turn, we see the indications of an ever-present night of sorrow. We take up our daily register of news, and our attention is attracted, first of all, to the record of those who have fallen in the battle of life. This is our first inquiry on returning home from a protracted absence. However much we may dread affliction, we have learned to know that it will come, — and this certainty creates unrest of soul. Now and then the heart inquires, tremblingly, who will be the next to pass away from our hearth-stones? And as the consciousness of uncertainty deepens, there descends upon the soul a gloom like night.

In such seasons, the man of the world may seek relief, by hardening his sensibilities with some stoical philosophy, — but relief from such a source is brutish, and in nowise spiritual. Not such the method of the Christian. When his heart is bereaved and clouded with sorrow, — when the thick gloom of affliction gathers about his soul, he reads the comprehensive instruction of some inspired prophet, betokening speedy and perpetual deliver-

ance, — and to him there arises light in the darkness. "The morning cometh," is the cry of the watchmen on the walls of life. "The day is at hand," is the welcome utterance of inspiration. "There shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, nor pain," is the assurance of prophecy concerning heaven. O, then, let us lift up our sorrowing hearts. Let us look away to the land of light and blessedness, where the night of mourning shall cease for ever, and the day of gladness shall possess our souls.

But the chief element of spiritual night is *sin*. This it is that underlies and gives vitality to all the rest. Had it not been for sin, man, we think, would never have been so deficient in mental power. His communion with God in Eden would have preserved, unimpaired, his reason and judgment. With such powers and with such companionship from day to day, man would have speedily attained to something like an angel's breadth of view. Unfettered by passion and lust, he would have mounted, as on the wings of eagles, far up into the intellectual sunlight. It is sin that has made us such mental pigmies. It is sin that has crippled our powers of thought. It is sin that

has shorn us of our mental beauty and moral strength. Look at mankind, groping about in darkness, their eyes bent earthward, given up to sensual thoughts, yielding to the dictates of their baser nature, forgetful of their Godlikeness, heedless of their spiritual state, stumbling along the brink of wo. What has brought us to this sad condition? *Sin.* It is sin that encircles us with temptation; it is sin that envelops us in error; it is sin that darkens the perceptions of our moral being. It is sin that has brought us under the tyranny of trials; it is sin that has left us to endure the pangs of poverty; it is sin that has placed the wormwood in our cup of life. This is the parent of our afflictions. It was the triumph of sin that brought death into the world. The crowded burial-places of earth and sea, speak loudly of the many victories of Death, and Death is the first-born child of sin. Whatever we see in man that is perverted, whether in heart or judgment, we may know that perversity to be the work of sin; for man was fashioned in the likeness of his Maker, and received that Maker's benediction. What has not sin done to man! It has robbed him of heart, and mind, and strength; of

physical beauty, intellectual power, moral worth. It has taken man from the dominion of God, and given him over to be the subject of evil. It has removed him from the society of angels, to the blighting influence of fallen spirits. It has taken away his assurance of eternal life, and rendered his future good subject to fearful hazards. What has not sin wrought? It has shed down upon the moral world all the darkness and deadly malaria of night. You can name no evil that may not be traced to sin. It is this that blinds us to the beauty of our Almighty Father. It is this that hinders our hearts from resting peacefully in God. It is this that chills our aspirations after the glories of the better life. By this we are made the heirs of grief, and pain, and death. Is there any thing surprising in the fact that God and sin are in opposition? that he cannot regard sin with allowance? And to this dangerous power we are all exposed in every stage of our history. We cannot remove ourselves from its destructive influence. We may lead a Christian life that will give us strength to resist its seductions; but while we live it will yet be near us. The grace of God may so fortify our hearts as to enable us to overcome the mighty

hosts of temptation, still they will make their fearful onsets against us; and the fact that evil is so prevalent, and so deadly in its effects, ought to drive man Christ-ward, for Christ is his only helper. It ought to strike such terror to the heart of the sinner, as to lead him to the protection of God's all-sufficient grace. If the transgressor of right could clearly see the dangerous position which he occupies, it would seem as if the view must drive him to the Almighty arm for deliverance and protection; for to him who continues the willing servant of sin, there is not only perpetual darkness in life, but the shades of night about his spirit will grow more and more dense, as he comes down to the gates of death, and the blackness of darkness will envelop his soul forever.

But to us who believe in Christ, does the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his beams. In the midst of our peril and darkness, there comes a voice out of the excellent glory, saying, "It shall soon be light. This darkness shall not go on with you forever. There is a country, yours by inheritance, where there entereth not a sin!" A little longer must our hearts experience the shadows of

evening and the gloom of night; but it is only for a season. Very soon the shadows will disperse. Even now, we are so near the grave we can almost see them pass away. Even now, the night of sin is far spent; its hours of darkness are almost gone. The clock of eternity will soon strike out the knell of time, and as its last echo dies away, our spirits shall wing themselves upward from the mists of earth. Those of us who believe in Christ may make ready our songs of rejoicing, for the day of purity is near at hand.

My Christian friend, is there not a power of comfort in the assurance of the speedy coming of an eternal day? Do not our hearts burn within us as we see the night preparing to lift itself from our spirits? A little time, and ignorance, temptation, trial, affliction, sin, will have lost all power upon us, for the land to which we hasten is a land of light. Then let our hearts be encouraged to cling to Christ, to rely on God. From the gospel let our souls gather strength to resist evil. Let our glad spirits drink in hope, from the assurance that the night of life is rapidly waning, and the day of eternity and heaven is hastening on.

THE MIDNIGHT VOICE.

BY ALBERT LAIGHTON.

FATHER, at this calm hour,
Alone, in prayer, I bend an humble knee:
My soul in silence wings its flight to Thee,
And owns Thy boundless power.

Day's weary toil is o'er;
No worldly strife my heartfelt worship mars;
Beneath the mystery of the silent stars,
I tremble and adore.

Not when the frenzied storm
Writhes 'mid the darkness, till in wild despair,
Bursting its thunder-chains, the lightning's glare
Reveals its awful form:

I wait not for that hour!
In flower and dew, in seasons calm and free,
I hear "*a still, small voice,*" that speaks of Thee
With holier, deeper power.

Above the thunder notes,
Serene and clear, the music of the spheres
Forever rolls, though not to mortal ears
The heavenly cadence floats.

Portsmouth, N. H.

SHADOWS.

BY HADASSAH.

This is a land of shadows;
In happiness or care
They follow on our footsteps
Like phantoms, everywhere.

Shadows, darkly brooding
On the cottage wall,
Shadows in the curtains
Of the rich man's hall.

Where the forest standeth,
Where the green grass waves,
Where the ocean smileth,
O'er the place of graves.

Where the gay procession
Moveth through the street,
Where the funeral follows,
Telling time is fleet.

Where the sounds of pleasure
Steal upon the air,
In the lonely graveyard—
Shadows everywhere.

Shadows when the maiden
Wears the bridal wreath,
Shadows when she sinketh
To the arms of death.

Shadows when the infant
Comes to bless our store,
Shadows when its coffin
Passes from the door.

In the days of childhood,
In our manhood's prime,
In the old man's twilight,
Shadows on each time.

Shadows where the Christian
Treads his way to God,
In the path of sorrow
That his Saviour trod.

When his faith is strongest,
When his footsteps roam,
Still the shadow veileth
His eternal home.

Shadows darkly brooding
O'er the brow of death,
As he bids the trembler
Yield his fleeting breath.

Shadows darkly stealing,
  Like the shades of night
Over death's stern portal:
  Onward — *fadeless light!*

INVOCATION TO FAITH.

BY HARRIET M'EWEN KIMBALL.

I.

Come thou, with that calm smile of thine
  Illuming all "Life's solemn main;"
And join thy trusting tones, sweet Faith,
  With radiant Hope's enrapturing strain.

II.

Floating upon the tideless sea
  In this poor, fragile bark I stand,
And tremble at the gloom beyond
  Veiling the brighter, better Land.

III.

Yet if thou smilest, holy Faith!—
  With starlike eyes upon the sea,
My spirit will not fear the storms,
  But sail in lasting peace with thee!

IV.

Come, then; for oh! "my soul is dark!"
To cheer my way, to thee, 'tis given;
Thy bosom shall my pillow be —
Thy voice shall sing my soul to Heaven!

V.

Clasping thy dear hand in the gloom,
Why should I fear the clouds above?
My bark all shattered by the storm,
Yet am I safe in arms of love!

Portsmouth, N. H.

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That they may behold my Glory

XI.

UPWARD.

"FATHER, I WILL THAT THEY ALSO WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN ME, BE WITH ME WHERE I AM, THAT THEY MAY BEHOLD MY GLORY."

In thine hour of agony Thou didst remember us, O Christ, and this Thy prayer shall be fulfilled! Ours shall be the crown, if we worthily bear the cross. Light ineffable shall be ours, if we struggle against the darkness. The house Beautiful shall be our dwelling, if we climb the hill Difficulty. And we know the way, for it is upward! For this, too, we thank Thee; else, too surely, would our gaze be downward, and our hopes would fasten to the earth to perish there. Thou didst go before us, up those steep hill-sides; thy bleeding feet have trodden the paths of mortal anguish; and to weary hearts, thine own can throb responsive, for weariness and woe were thine, O man of sorrows! By that name of ten-

derness, we must remember thee, though thou art now the King of glory. Eagerly, though wearily, we press upwards to thee, — to thee, who shared our sorrows that we might share thy joy!

Upward, upward, ever upward!
If we aught of good would win,
— This the law of human progress, —
Up — from darkness and from sin!

Thanks, O Jesus! for the lesson
Taught by thy heroic life!
Struggling, suffering, yet triumphant,
Though with *mortal* pain and strife.

Thus shall our endeavors crown us,
By thine aid, O dearest Friend!
If the sins that seek to wrong us,
From our hearts we strive to rend.

Strive we must, while here abiding,
Strive, with conscience, or with sin.
Wretched those! who thee deriding,
Choose the *penalty* to win.

Darkness is sin's heavy wages, —
Learn, my soul, thy foe to shun!
Upward toil to light and glory,
There will rest and joy be won.

Rest; though upward still our motion!
"Wings, as eagles," strong will bear
Upward ever, — as our spirits
Purer glow, in heavenly air.

Light and blessedness thy portion!
Look, my soul! be strong and free;
Christ the weary, — Christ the victor, —
Lo! stands there to welcome *thee*.

ELIZA W. CLARK.

East Boston.

XII.

THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

THE incarnation of the Son of God was the obscuration of his glory. By assuming our nature, he limited himself, in a great measure, to the possibilities of human development. It is true that the divine burst forth from the human in his miracles, his teachings, his heavenly virtues. Still the Sun of Righteousness was in our moral firmament under an eclipse. That which was seen and known of the Saviour was to the unseen and the unknown, what a single ray of light is to the splendors of the noonday's sun. Mankind were not prepared to gaze upon the effulgence of his being. Their organs of vision could not have endured the dazzling brightness. In leaving therefore his throne he left behind him its glory, threw aside his robes of royalty, and the emblems of his

power, and stepped upon the theatre of human action, in the form of a servant. He knew that men needed to be served, rather than to be dazzled. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. He sought not the applause of men, he simply asked for their faith. He wished not to excite admiration, but repentance and obedience.

He felt, too, the incongruity of appearing in his glory in a revolted province of his father's empire. Here he was among convicts, those over whose heads hung the death sentence. In his view sin clothed the earth in sackcloth. Accustomed from eternity to gaze upon a pure and holy kingdom, upon the beauties and splendors of celestial realms; accustomed to breathe an atmosphere impregnated with the spirit of obedience, worship, and love, he must have looked upon the scenes around him here with indescribable sadness; and he thought only of repairing the evil which had been wrought. He girded himself for his great work, rather than adorned himself for display. As he walked abroad, he felt as one would while wandering amid the ruins of an ancient, wealthy, and magnificent city. The marks of skill, power, beauty, and grandeur were all around him. But

the broken columns, the defaced walls, and fallen temples, indicated that a fearful calamity had passed over this fair creation. His intercourse with mankind confirmed his earliest impressions of the extent of the ruin, the intensity of human guilt, and the violence of man's hostility towards his Maker.

But as his earthly career drew to a close, and he thought of his home, of the peace and serenity of his father's empire, of the splendor of royal palaces, and the thrilling delights of spiritual worship, and the adoration of unnumbered millions of holy subjects, his feelings prompted him to utter this prayer, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." He did not wish to partake of these joys alone. He desired especially that those who had been with him in his humiliation, who had shared his labors, trials, and sorrows, should also share in the honors that awaited his arrival in the kingdom of his Father.

It would be presumption in us to attempt to delineate the elements and features of this glory. For how shall we describe that which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor even the heart of man con-

ceived? How shall we scale those heights that are inaccessible to the most pure, and favored, and aspiring of the children of men? How shall we paint scenes that are far beyond the range of human vision, scenes concerning which the Great Teacher himself was silent? Yet what is more natural to the human intellect than the desire to penetrate the future, to draw aside the veil that separates the invisible from the visible, to read the future of that eventful, endless life upon which we have entered? What do we need more than the encouragement and the stimulus that come from those far-off regions? What will stir our affections more deeply, and excite throughout our moral nature a more healthy action, than a knowledge of these future glories? It is not a vain curiosity that prompts the Christian to meditate upon such a theme. It is not an unhallowed ambition that inspires him with earnest desires to obtain, at least, glimpses of the mansions and crowns that are before the righteous.

As no full revelation has been made to us of the elements of the Saviour's glory, we must learn them through the qualities and virtues which he manifested while he was upon the earth. As the

astronomer is led to form his opinions of the material universe through the lights that line the coasts of these vast domains, so we may form opinions of the glory of the Saviour, through the light of those virtues that shone from his character while he was upon the earth. We believe that Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; the same whether a preacher on the mount, or a worker of miracles, or a sufferer in Gethsemane, or an advocate at the right hand of the Father; or in his glory exalted far above all principalities and powers. And the developments that he makes of himself on earth, and in heaven, differ not so much in nature, as in degree. Here we have only the twilight, while in the celestial world is seen the full effulgence of his glory.

Among the elements of his glory we might specify, in the first place, his holiness. This he possessed before the foundations of the world were laid. It was a constituent part of himself, a part of his divine nature. United to humanity it became developed in human action, in a life subject to every variety of circumstances, temptations, and trials. How this union was formed, and how the divine acted upon and regulated the human

nature, are questions that we cannot answer. It is sufficient for us to know that such a union did exist, and that Christ, though tempted in all points as we are, yet remained without sin. According to the Scriptures, there was not the least taint of evil upon him. Every motive, thought, feeling, desire, word, and deed was pure. His character was the embodiment of every holy principle. His life was the divine moral government in action. Every holy law, every benevolent principle, every heavenly virtue was illustrated in his career. Had it been otherwise, he could not have atoned for the sins of the world. To be an acceptable sacrifice, he must be a pure sacrifice, one without spot or blemish. The acceptance of his sufferings and death by the Supreme Sovereign, instead of the punishment of the wicked, was on the ground of his own perfect innocence. This gave force and efficacy to his redemption. It also gave force to his teachings, his example, his whole life. It distinguished him from all other beings who had ever trod the earth. It threw around him a halo of glory.

From whatever stand-point we view the Messiah, whether in his relations to the Father, to

angels, or to men, this attribute appears strikingly conspicuous. He is spoken of as "the image of the invisible God," as "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." Of course the resemblance must extend to the holiness of the Deity. To remove all doubt we are told that "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." No attribute, no trait is wanting in this manifestation of the Deity.

It is obvious that the Father could sanction no worship except that bestowed upon an infinitely holy being. But what was the command issued at the inauguration of the Messiah's reign? "When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him." Very many of the epithets bestowed upon the Saviour are expressive of this attribute. He is called "the light of the world," "the bright and morning star," "the holy one of Israel," "the holy one of God."

But some may doubt the propriety of instituting a comparison between the holy character of Christ, and the principles of mankind, on the ground that he was aided by his divine nature, while man is finite, and besides has a positively

sinful nature to contend against. It is true that in the character of Christ the divine was united to the human, and necessarily aided the human; but it is also true that Christ had peculiar trials and temptations, such as no mortal could fully appreciate. Conscious of his great mission, keenly sensitive to wrong in all its forms, his whole nature protesting against injustice, ingratitude, selfishness, and every kind and degree of human wickedness, he must constantly have had his feelings outraged. He must have been pierced by a thousand agonies, that would have made little or no impression upon a less sensitive spirit. When we are told that he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," we cannot penetrate the full meaning of these emphatic words. His frequent and earnest prayers amid the mountains of Judea; the hardness, stupidity, and ingratitude of multitudes whom he labored to bless; the unbelief of those who witnessed his mighty works, his tears and his sympathy with the bereaved, his agony in the garden; his deep consciousness of the gross injustice of his trial, the bitter opposition and unrelenting cruelty of the mob who thirsted for his blood, all attest the severity of his

trials. They show the immense pressure that was brought to bear against his character, against his holy principles; and had there been a flaw in this character at any point, it must, under such a pressure, have given way. But throughout the whole, not a sinful word escapes his lips, not a malicious or revengeful thought towards his persecutors enters his mind. "When reviled, he reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not." Even in his last death agonies, when all nature was convulsed, when a darkened sky, rending rocks, and opening graves, bore witness to the awful nature of the tragedy, there ascended to heaven the touching prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." From the striking development of the attribute of holiness in the life of Jesus, we argue that it must enter largely into the future manifestations of his glory. If it was so conspicuous upon this theatre of human apostasy, so apparent in the various positions in which Christ was placed, in his intercourse with all conditions of men, in the painful and trying circumstances in which he was often placed, how much more fully and gloriously will it be manifested upon a higher and nobler theatre, where

there will be nothing to obstruct its progress, but every thing to call forth its most brilliant manifestations! We must believe that Christ desired that his disciples might be with him, in order that they might see him glorious in holiness. They had seen him under a cloud. They had seen him struggling to manifest this attribute among wicked men, who were ever ready to suspect his motives, deny his actions, and charge him with all manner of deceit, but he desires and prays that they may behold him amid the splendors of his Father's kingdom, behold him where his presence will excite the adoration and worship of myriads of holy beings.

Another brilliant star in the constellation of his virtues will be his love. We have an easy task before us, to prove the existence of this divine attribute in the future exhibition of the Messiah's glory. All who admit the bare fact that Christ lived, must admit that this was a conspicuous trait in his character. His love is a part of his inmost nature, the substance and essence of his being. It enters into our essential idea of a Saviour. It lies at the foundation of the plan of salvation, — is the material out of which the super-

structure is wrought. It furnishes the columns, walls, and towers. It is the glory of the edifice, its light, beauty, and chief attractions. Christ could say emphatically what Jehovah said to Moses when he desired to see his glory: "I will cause my goodness to pass before thee." From the manger to the grave, his life was one ever flowing stream of goodness; or rather it was a rising tide of love that reached its height, when it touched the summit of Mount Calvary.

This attribute gave not only beauty and attractiveness, but perfect symmetry to the character of the Saviour. It gave to every virtue its proper proportion and just relations to all the rest. There is force in the remark of an able writer, that "the difficulty which we chiefly feel in dealing with the character of Christ, as it unfolded itself before men, arises from its absolute perfection. On this very account it is less fitted to arrest observation. A single excellence unusually developed, though in the neighborhood of great faults, is instantly and universally attractive. Perfect symmetry, on the other hand, does not startle, and is hidden from common and casual observers. But it is this that belongs emphati-

cally to the Christ of the gospels; and we distinguish in him at each moment that precise manifestation which is most natural and most right. . . . In human beings, there never is an approach to sustained, proportioned, and universal goodness. The manifestation in one direction is so high as to be unnatural, while in another direction, it falls perhaps below the standard of our conceptions. This wondrous Person always is, and acts up to the idea of perfect humanity, — never unnaturally elevated so as to be out of fellowship with men, and never below the highest human excellence, conceivable in the particular circumstances at the time." How often in distinguished characters among men, do we find some one virtue or power conspicuous, while others are altogether wanting. One is ardent in the pursuit of a given object, but he lacks discretion and judgment. Another is tender and amiable, but he is deficient in force of character. Another cultivates the intellect to the highest degree, while the affections remain dormant. But in Christ, all the virtues, human and divine, meet, forming a perfect character. The ardor and warmth of the heart do not get the better of the judgment.

His intense love for man does not go beyond the bounds prescribed by holiness. His infinite mercy never leads him to forget that justice and judgment are the habitation of God's throne. In his intense and burning desire to save the world, he is ever decided in insisting upon a strict conformity, on the part of man, with the terms of salvation.

Besides this balance of virtues and symmetry of character that give force to his benevolence, there is a simplicity and freshness about the manifestations of his love, that are calculated to impress and win the beholder. These manifestations never seem to be the result of studied effort, or carefully laid plans. They flow from Christ as freely and naturally as water flows from the fountain, or light pours forth from the sun.

Now if this element of the Saviour's character was so conspicuous throughout the whole of his earthly career; if it so pervaded him as to envelop his person in a halo of glory, and caused virtue to go forth even from the hem of his garment; if it wrought here such achievements for truth and righteousness; if it is the element

that clothes the earth with beauty, gives brightness to the stars, freshness to the verdure, loveliness to the landscape, that lifts from the soul its clouds of gloom, gives strength to the weary, hope to the despairing, takes the sting from death and the victory from the grave, will it not enter largely into the future glory of the Saviour? Will not its radiance be thrown over the cities, temples, and palaces of the celestial realms? Will it not elicit the praises and worship of the great multitude that no man can number, that with palms in their hands and crowns upon their heads will participate in the triumphs of Christ's second coming? Then, and not till then, shall we "be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Then with spiritual organs of vision, with enlarged capacities, with hearts purged from all sin, shall we be able to gaze upon the "brightness of the Father's glory."

"Oh for this love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious, human tongues,
The Saviour's praises speak.

"Angels, assist our mighty joys,
Strike all your harps of gold!
But when you raise your highest notes,
His love can ne'er be told."

The wisdom of Christ will also be a bright gem in his crown.

Of this attribute, we have glimpses in the scheme of redemption, in the manner in which Christ unfolded divine truth, in his dealings with the various dispositions and prejudices of men, and in the adaptation of his system to the wants and longings of the human heart. Indeed, he is spoken of as one "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom." He is called the "wisdom of God," not simply wise, or a striking manifestation of wisdom, but the very essence and substance of wisdom.

We may well suppose, that an enterprise requiring him to take his stand between the divine government and human rebellion, for the purpose of securing harmony between such antagonistic forces, must demand more than finite resources of wisdom. To bring order out of confusion, loyalty out of rebellion; to satisfy the law, and at the same time secure the pardon of the guilty; to so

distribute and adjust the moral forces that he wielded as to maintain the authority of God, and the free agency of man, was an undertaking of no ordinary character. It required a degree of wisdom that was capable of taking within its wide reach, all the interests of God's moral kingdom, and considering the bearing of the atoning sacrifice upon every department of the divine government.

But the fullest and most glorious displays of this attribute, will be made upon a higher and nobler theatre. When the scheme of redemption shall have wrought out its glorious results; when it shall have subdued the opposition of the human heart, lifted the nations from their degradation and moral debasement, and filled heaven with the trophies of its victories, then will be seen the glories of this wisdom in their brightest splendors. Then from myriads of grateful hearts there will break forth the anthem, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Then will the vast multitude of the redeemed, adore that holiness that rendered the offering of Christ an acceptable sacrifice; rejoice

in the infinite love that prompted the gift, and worship that matchless wisdom, which has brought the scheme of salvation to such a glorious consummation.

THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

BY MRS. E. W. CLARK.

WHAT makes that glory shine so bright,
Beyond e'en fancy's boldest flight?
Why sweeter than all names beside,
Is that borne by the Crucified?

REDEEMER! this the name of love,
All other titles far above!
Angels with deepest awe were stirred,
When first that wondrous NAME was heard.

To altars shrined in holy prayer,
Parents now bring with pious care
Babes, to receive a *Christian name;*
(For such the Lord of Glory came).

And softly on the tender brow,
The harmless drops of water flow;
A precious type of purity,
Which startles not e'en infancy.

Baptized with other drops than these,
The Father, his Begotten sees!
Thorns pierced, and made a bloody chrism,
This, the *Redeemer's* sad baptism!

Yet bright on Calvary's altar stern,
A mystic light began to burn;
While by the name thus meekly gained,
Christ's *crowning glory* was obtained.

And surely 't is no idle thought
That *thus* His noblest crown was bought!
The lesson here to mortals given,
Could only come from highest heaven.

SELF-SACRIFICE! a holy thing,
With which to tempt th' aspiring wing!
Our souls may soar; but steadily
Our weary feet must follow THEE.

Must follow Thee! The cross, the thorn,
For *others*, must be meekly borne;
Transformed — they 'll seem, in heavenly air,
Like crowns, which Christ himself doth wear!

East Boston.

XIII.

HEAVEN SPIRITUAL.

BY PROFESSOR F. D. HUNTINGTON, D. D.

It is not more true that "tribulation and anguish" impend over "every soul of man that doeth evil," and will be his inevitable portion, than that "glory, honor, and peace" shall set their crown on "every man that worketh good." Both are made equally certain, under the authority of the same gospel, and of natural demonstration. Both are pledged under the general declaration, which no believing Christian pretends to doubt, that "God will render to every man according to his deeds."

About the fact that the soul is immortal, there can be no argument. On that point, many words have been wasted. The simple truth is that of

all spirit — every spirit — life, continued life, eternal life, that is, immortality, is an inherent property. To speak of a soul not immortal, is really a contradiction in terms. The only way in which we can describe spirit is, as something indestructible, and eternally living. Take away its immortality, and you take away what makes it a spirit. Let it cease to be undying, and it ceases to be a soul.

With earnest and right-minded persons, an existence in a future life is a matter of simple consciousness, — it is an interior conviction, it is *felt* to be a truth. Living under the steady light of Christianity, it comes to us without any effort or any searching for it on our part. The heart craves it, of itself, longs for it, will not be content without it. You can hardly find a man, or a woman, or even a child, of natural sensibility, that does not assent, almost by an instinct, to this belief in a future life. And this inward demand for it, is peculiarly vivid and strong under all the trials, and weaknesses, and disappointments, and bereavements of our mortality, — when this world is least satisfying, its pleasures are least fascinating, its supports least firm, its prosperity and health sinking away beneath us. On this very day, multi-

tudes of faithful souls, prisoned in weary bodies, lie panting on sick-beds, or sit in agony with some secret sorrow, or wander through the desolate house of mourning, sustained in their courage by nothing but the hope of heaven; looking there for the only ray of light, the only balm of consolation, the only solution of the mystery. This earth has absolutely nothing, any more, to comfort, or interest, or strengthen them. It is not for us to play the censor upon their anguish. They look on to heaven. They wait and long, by patient continuance in well-doing, for the moment to come when this mortal shall put on immortality. Thanks be to the Father and his risen Son, that they have this sure refuge! It is a safe conclusion, that "God would never launch so frail a vessel" as this mortal life, "on so stormy a sea" as this mortal scene, "where the roll of every wave may wreck us, were it not designed to float at length on serener waters and beneath gentler skies."

Through all the forms that the belief in immortality has taken in the history of the world, and the progress of its ideas, it is easy to observe this one prevailing law, that men's conceptions of a

future state, in every period and country, have been exactly graduated, according to their present culture and elevation in spiritual things. Their notion of the life after death has been measured and determined by their own capacity and attainments in a spiritual life before death. As far as their philosophy was material and their tastes were sensual, they here looked for a material and sensual paradise. In other words, they have shaped their heaven by the figures of their own minds, and imagined celestial habitations corresponding to their present sense of enjoyment here.

Perhaps the lowest form that this doctrine of a continued existence after death has assumed, is that of the transmigration of the soul of the dying person into some other person's body or into some animal on earth. This had its origin with the eastern nations, but has prevailed only to a very limited extent, and then in the most rude and barbarous states of society. Apart from its contradiction of Scripture, a fatal objection to it is, that it cuts off all possibility of progress, and instead of carrying the spirit up to a higher and more glorious condition after its earthly discipline is over, drags it back and sinks it in the life of a

creature, only equal, perhaps even inferior to itself, thus making it revolve in a circle of endless change, but in the same contracted compass, without enlargement and without advance. The practice of embalming the dead among the Egyptians, was founded on the supposition that the deceased body still contained, in some mysterious way, the deathless spark of the spirit, and is thus an evidence of the strength of their belief in a certain sort of immortality. A similar faith was evinced on the part of the Romans, by the opinion that the souls of the dead could never be at rest unless their bodies were buried, and that without this interment, spirits must wander desolate a hundred years on the banks of the Styx, without crossing into the realm of shades. Indeed, a certain vague theory of immortality was not only held by the sages and philosophers of the Greek and Roman antiquity, as appears from Plato's dialogue, and Pindar, and Hesiod, and Homer, and many passages in the works of Cicero; but the beautiful fiction of Psyche shows that it had a place in the popular mythology, though mixed with much sensuous imagery. Such as the men were, and mortal life, such, on a little larger scale, was

the life of the immortal gods of Olympus, and of the departed in the Isles of the Blessed. The traditions of the North American savages drew pictures of their far-off fields of Elysium for the brave, — by transferring to those happy regions the sports, the weapons, the food, and the hunting grounds of the wilderness, only idealized into greater perfection. The Mahometan, trained to a passionate relish of oriental luxuries, made his paradise to consist in palaces of marble, robes of silk, rivers and shades, groves and couches, wines and dainties, and all voluptuous indolence and entertainment. As in the other barbarous tribes and nations, warriors and destroyers held the first title to celestial glory, and the surest keys to heaven's gate were the sword and spear. It is written in the Koran, the Mahometan Bible, "truly God hath purchased of the true believers their souls and their substance, promising them the enjoyment of paradise *on condition that they fight* for the cause of God."

Perhaps there is no better illustration of the progress of ideas concerning the future life, as being precisely commensurate with the general progress of mankind in knowledge, civilization,

and especially in a spiritual religion, than we find in the three great epic poems of Virgil, Dante, and Milton, each of them containing an elaborate description of the immortal kingdom. And these, though poetic in form, are only true pictures of the views prevailing in their several ages. Virgil, living a few years before Christ, represents the Pagan impressions of the old heathen world. He portrays both Tartarus and Elysium under the coarsest imagery, introduces beasts and other physical objects, puts the whole scene under the ground, tells us expressly that those whose delight has been only in arms, in fighting, and in the rearing of horses, shall have the same occupations provided for them hereafter, and appears to have exhausted his finest apprehension of a spiritual existence, when he states that Æneas, in attempting to clasp and embrace the shade of his departed father, Anchises, whom he meets there, finds that the frame is of some ethereal substance, and that his arms passed though it as through thin air, grasping nothing.

Dante wrote in the beginning of the fourteenth century, in the twilight that followed the night of the dark ages. Dante represents the ideas of the

Romish church in its palmiest days. He shows a great advance beyond the Pagan. He apprehends many lofty beauties of the spiritual world, and even causes Beatrice, his imaginary guide through the celestial spaces, to announce this sublime sentiment, that "all are blessed, even as their minds descend deeper into the truth." He makes, however, a materialistic distribution of heaven; assigning to each separate class of spirits a planet, or the sun, or the moon, in nine gradations. Though he does not yield to warriors the very first place, like Virgil and Mahomet, he exalts them to the fifth heaven, and above some whose virtues entitle them to a superior station. Unsound Catholic as he was, he develops the unscriptural theory of a purgatory, and is often triflingly fanciful; as where he makes some of the greatest souls of the dead to contribute, by their lustre, to form the brilliancy of an eagle's eye.

Milton is the epic poet of Protestantism, of English Republicanism, of the era of liberty, both in intellect and conscience. His emancipated conceptions take a wider and purer range. They approach more nearly to the simple faith of the New Testament. It is true, he employs much

material imagery in his descriptions of heaven, and even introduces armies and engines of destruction on the celestial fields. But it is evident he does this, rather as a part of the machinery of his art, by the license of the poet, and not designing it to be understood otherwise than as an imaginative presentation of the subject, than as a belief. He rises to juster views than either his heathen or his Romish predecessor. He peoples the upper world with angels and saints, whose worthy and *truly* holy office it is to guard, watch over, and bless their fellow spirits on earth. He represents their employments as serving and adoring the everlasting God and Father, not only by voices of unmingled worship, but by noble deeds of mercy and love. And he displays heaven as the scene of the boundless and infinite redemption of man's soul from misery and sin, whereby he figures forth, in faint but striking outlines, the actual doctrine, and majestic import, of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So it is with us all, everywhere, in common life, as in these three world-renowned poets. Our ideas of heaven will depend upon our knowledge, our spirituality, our degree of faith and obedience.

He that doeth God's will, shall know more and more of this, as of other religious doctrines; and the more faithfully he does the will, the more clearly will he know the doctrine. Men will not truly *believe* in immortality at all, till their hearts lead them to; that is, till they feel conscious of wants in them that this world will not satisfy, powers that this world does not exercise, affections which this world cannot respond to nor reciprocate, a faith to which this world furnishes no corresponding reality as an object, and an inward capacity of action for which these narrow boundaries of flesh and time are too contracted. When they arrive at these spiritual convictions, they will turn reverently, and affectionately, and believingly, from the world that now is, to one that is infinite, unconfined by any material or earthly limitations, and everlasting. Heaven is in fact "needed to complete the history of earth." Every human soul, once fairly looked into, understood by itself, become fully conscious of itself, prophecies its own immortality. In this sense, at least, the saying of Charles Lamb is unquestionably true, that "the shapings of our heavens are the modifications of our constitution."

I would not be supposed to decry every attempt to set forth the glory and the happiness of heaven, under images drawn from these earthly scenes, and of a material nature. Living as we do in the body, ministered to as we are by the senses, we cannot if we would be wholly independent of association with external things. It is no error, probably, in many cases, when we carry over into the region of invisible life and beauty and power before us, such terms and phrases and imagery, as have become familiar to us while contemplating the fairest beauties of nature, — noble mountains, resplendent rivers, green meadows, venerable forests, and the clear arch of the sky lighted by God's sun and stars, or while listening to the richest melody and harmony that entrance the ear, and "take the prisoned soul and lap it in Elysium" even while on earth. It is for this reason that John, in that splendid drama and gorgeous vision of the Apocalypse, from which most of this descriptive language has been borrowed, dwells on the holy city descending from God, of gold clear as glass, having walls like jasper, and the foundations garnished with precious stones, and the twelve gates twelve pearls; on the pure river

of life, like crystal, and the living fountains of waters, flowing in the midst thereof; on the thrones, and the white raiment, and the palm branches, and the harps of the angelic inhabitants. Nor can there be any doubt, on the other hand, that this mere poetic drapery has been made too thick, so as to hide the real dignity of futurity, and cover up its rightful employments of labor and charity for substantial good. So great and good a man as Luther carried it too far, when he degraded the subject in a mistaken attempt to *bring it down* to the comprehension of his child, telling him heaven was a garden full of children, who run about eating fruit from the trees, and amusing themselves forever with little horses having golden bridles and silver saddles, and with drums and crossbows. Children are wronged by such mistaken condescensions. They understand spiritual things rightly and simply presented, quite as naturally, and hearken to them as readily, as sensual things. And it is so with grown persons, older children. One of our commonest errors is to think of heaven as a place of passive repose, idle enjoyment, fruitless inaction, doing nothing. But the truth is, must be, that as in this world so

in the next, work, noble and generous and merciful work, efficient, spiritual work for God and other spirits, will be the highest honor and the richest satisfaction.

One circumstance in reference to the scriptural language ought to be carefully noted; that although it employs figurative terms, it employs them in such a way as to make it evident they are not intended to be any thing but figurative, and only to suggest glowing thoughts, and excite our sluggish and feeble conceptions. Thus these figures of speech vary from each other; the metaphors and descriptions are entirely different; in one place heaven is a "city," and in another a "garden;" in one place a "life," and in another a "treasure," which neither moth nor rust can corrupt; sometimes, a "crown of glory," and at others an "inheritance," incorruptible and undefiled; sometimes a "kingdom" which shall never be moved, and sometimes a "house" of many mansions, — a "building not made with hands;" all these varieties and discrepancies of expression showing that neither of them is literal, but that all only faithfully symbolize some great good, some infinite and inexpressible beatitude. And

that is not of the earth, earthy, but of the spirit, spiritual.

And then there is a class of much more significant and sublime declarations, which point us more directly to this spiritual estate, especially those of Jesus himself, as where he says, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." "I am the resurrection and the life." "Whosoever believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whoso liveth and believeth in me, shall never die."

What, then, shall be *our* idea of heaven, — that heaven of which we all speak, for which we all pray, to which we all look forward with longings more or less distinct, and earnestly desiring to be admitted into its great joy? What is heaven to us? Obviously much must remain obscure and unknown. It would seem that it was God's will and good design, even in the revelation of his son, to leave much uncertain, much room for faith as well as knowledge, granting us enough to sustain and encourage us, enough for faith to live upon, yet reserving many things to be revealed hereafter, and whose very revela-

tion hereafter shall form a part of the heavenly glory.

Still there are some things which we are permitted, even here, in these mortal valleys, to see; some conclusions at which we may reasonably arrive, guided by the light within and the light from the gospel, and these are full of the holiest interest to us, in our trial, and discipline, and expectation.

There is every reason to believe that the future life of the soul will correspond to its laws and its nature here. There will be no violent revolution, no sudden transformation of us. When the body drops off, the spirit will remain essentially the same. As we lie down to our sleep, we shall awake and arise. What we have sown, we shall reap. At the same time, the spirits of the righteous shall find themselves clothed with new powers, possessed of enlarged resources, participating in loftier pleasures. If you delight in goodness here, — good deeds, quickening words, elevating thoughts, — you will find a deeper relish for them, and an unexhausted abundance of them thronging upon you, and shedding their benedictions on you, from every side, hereafter. If only truth satisfies

you on earth, you will have it common and plenteous as the air, and will breathe it in unceasingly in heaven. If you have sought and striven for the cause of freedom, and in the spirit of love, in these human habitations, you shall enter on an unbounded liberty, and a love whose flowing tide no hand can measure or resist, above.

It will be a place of greater knowledge. If we know any thing of the laws of the mind, it must make infinite advances in the scope of its understanding, in the strength of its reason, in the energy of its will, in the quickness and clearness of its memory, and the soaring flights of its imagination. Nor will that progress in intellectual acquirements be the slow, painful, hesitating, creeping, and often baffled march that it is always, at best, on earth, but it will spring suddenly onward, and swiftly upward, by long and rapid stages, and from height to height, penetrating the profound secrets and hidden mysteries of the universe. The scales that cover these mortal eyes will drop; blindness will give place to vision; what is deep science and masterly erudition, for the most patient and investigating minds here, earned only by gigantic studies, will there become but the spirit's

easy alphabet, or simplest instinct, under the immediate tuition of the skies. Clothed upon with that unearthly tabernacle, our every perception will be quickened and cleansed; perhaps new senses, spiritual organs, will be added to us, opening spheres of insight undreamed of in this life, and remarkable as those the sense of sight gives us cognizance of here. Judgment will be less fallible; taste will be refined; assurance will be confirmed; doubts will disappear; clouds will roll off; obscurity will give place to light. The breaking forth of the splendors and glories of the celestial world on the ascended soul, at its resurrection, will be a surprise and a rapture, faintly illustrated by the burst of a sudden sunrise amidst the richest scenery of nature, on men groping and stumbling, bewildered in utter darkness. "Now," in the firm language of the apostle, "now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as we are known."

The justified and pure soul, accepted of God, will receive fresh accessions, not only of knowledge, but of goodness; not only of wisdom, but of holiness. It is something to be delivered from

the body, its infirmities and sicknesses and pains, but far more to be delivered from moral and spiritual ills. The petty trials and vexations that beset and perplex us in our intercourse with men, will harass us no longer in the society of the redeemed. A power, unfelt before, of conquering evil, will be supplied to us. There will not be that sad halting and mortifying failure between our resolves and our execution of them, our purposes and our deeds, which so humiliate us now. We may go straight from the holy desire to the beneficent fulfilment, and do all things after the pattern shown us in the mount. Love, and charity, and mercy shall possess us, not in their present meagre and stinted measure, but in full and free abundance. Our feet shall run with readier willingness, and our whole being move with more concordant and harmonious determinations, to all benignant ministries of good. Every encouragement, and assistance, and support will be extended to us in this goodness. For excellence in its most exalted, attractive, and beautiful forms will prevail around us. Its celestial images will pass continually before our eyes. Weakness of principle, temptation to sin, sensual passion, dread of falling

from virtue, and all the untold miseries that wait upon them will cease. The sorrows, the sufferings, the hardships, the poverty, the disappointments, the bereavements, the alienations, misunderstandings, broken friendships, lost fellowships, departures of those we love from the way of rectitude, — all these will be forgotten, or, if remembered at all, soon lost and swallowed up in the infinite joy of salvation, the great fruition of blessedness, in boundless trust in the Father. Vision will take the place of faith; sight will be the substitute for hope; there will be less of the spirit of mere obedience than of earnest affection; duty will be not a task but a delight; there will be no fear, but love, because perfect love casteth out fear; there will be unbroken peace. And above all, our completest bliss shall be that there is *no sin there.* All its wretched plottings, its defilement, its confusion, its discord, its torture of remorse, will have vanished forever in that serener climate, under the holy light of that sun of perfect righteousness that rises with healing in his beams.

What the employments of the future world will be, we have only imperfect means of conceiving. It is enough that we are sure they will surpass all.

our present honors, and transcend our best mortal experience. Doubtless our highest imaginings and finest fancies, such as spring up in our best moments, when we are in solitude, in devout meditation, all the visions of childhood, dreams of youth, midnight musings, reveries of the mind in its most reverent and thoughtful moods, do prefigure and prophesy our future being, a state where all that is truly bright and beautiful and desirable in them will be realized. There we shall be drawn into a more efficient and faithful service of our God, having not only a clearer revelation of his perfections, a truer knowledge of his character, but a nobler power of obeying his will, executing his commands, discharging his errands, and trusting him as our Father. There we shall be permitted to attain a more entire discipleship to Jesus Christ, enter more intimately into his society and the fellowship of his spirit, sit more nearly at his feet, gain a new comprehension of his divine motives and principles, rendering him a more devoted allegiance and a more loyal fidelity than we ever arrive at in our mortality. There, too, we shall probably be able to do more than we yet know for those that we leave behind us on earth,

the kindred and friends that we have loved and parted from. Just as one leaving his home for a distant land looks forward, and is consoled, at parting, by the prospect of being able to send back gifts and information, and perhaps support, to those that remain, so we are allowed to hope that we shall be sent on ministrations of guardianship and blessing, to watch over beloved hearts, and bestow spiritual help upon their lives, when we have passed into heaven. There, too, the spirits of the just made perfect will perform sacred and tender offices towards each other, and the celestial mansions will be gladdened and adorned with the mutual sympathy and interest of fellow immortals.

For, finally, there is abundant cause to believe that heaven shall be a social state, — that holy companionships and blessed affections shall fill up the circle of its endless hours. What beings shall unite there, and what meetings there will be! You will see God as he is, and receive the direct manifestations of his Deity. You shall see Jesus as he is, and converse with him, as man speaketh with his friend. You shall hold communion with "the spirits of your fathers, with patriarchs of the ancient world, with prophets and sages of other

days, with all the mighty host which has trodden the earth and slept in its bosom." There, unless all the dear presentiments of our being have conspired to deceive us, the faithful will receive the greetings of souls that they have been suffered to bless, and will rejoin the sundered ties, and regather the broken links, and reclasp the sundered affections, that were suspended by the grave.

"The parent finds the long lost child,
Brothers on brothers gaze;
Congenial minds arrayed in light,
High thoughts shall interchange,
Nor cease, with ever-new delight
On wings of love to range."

The love that had but begun to bind two hearts together here, when one of them ceased to beat and left the other to throb on in the quickened beat of agonized bereavement, shall there be rekindled and burn forever, where they go no more out, in the gardens, unlike that of Joseph, where no sepulchres are, and where separations are unknown. This faith the Scripture countenances, for it speaks always in language that implies that the future is a social condition, — of the great *congregation* of the purified, of the *company* of angels,

of the assembly of saints. And if no other instruction taught it to us, the indestructible instincts that God has planted in our hearts will so root it in our Christian confidence, that not all the scepticism of incredulous worldliness or impiety has power to pluck it away.

It has been the happy belief of the purest and greatest spirits, from the beginning of time, sanctioned by the providence of God, that a period is to come, even on this earth, of indescribable blessedness and glory. It is this millennial hope that has inspired all prophets, from the rapt imagination of Isaiah to the humblest Christian of to-day; the hope of a time when the world shall be

> "Much better visibly, and when, as far
> As social life and its relations tend,
> Men, morals, manners, shall be lifted up,
> To a pure height we know not of, nor dream;
> When all men's rights and duties shall be clear,
> And charitably exercised and borne;
> When education, conscience, and good deeds
> Shall have just, equal sway, and civil claims;
> Great crimes shall be cast out, as were of old
> Devils possessing madmen: Truth shall reign,
> Nature shall be rethroned, and man sublimed."

And the only regret that has marred the joy of

this great and glorious expectancy, has been, with each, that "we may not live to see the day." But what if it be so? Though we do not live to see it on the earth, we shall live again, beyond and above earth, and then we shall certainly see it, see it as no prophet has yet foretold it.

Let us remember that there is a condition imposed by which only we can enter into that kingdom. It is only they who sow to the spirit, in their hearts, that shall reap life everlasting.

O, TALK TO ME OF HEAVEN.

BOWLES.

O, TALK to me of heaven! I love
To hear about my home above;
For there doth many a loved one dwell
In light and joy ineffable.
O, tell me how they shine and sing,
While every harp rings echoing;
And every glad and tearless eye
Beams, like the bright sun, gloriously.
Tell me of that victorious palm,
  Each hand in glory beareth,
Tell me of that celestial calm
  Each face in glory weareth.

O, happy, happy country, where
  There entereth not a sin;
And death, who keeps its portals fair,
  May never once come in.
No grief can change their day to night;
The darkness of that land is light;
Sorrow and sighing God hath sent
From thence to endless banishment;
And never more may one dark tear
  Bedim their burning eyes;
For every one they shed while here
  In fearful agonies,

Glitters a bright and dazzling gem
In their immortal diadem.

O lovely, blooming country! there
Flourishes all that we deem fair;
And though no fields nor forests green,
Nor bowery gardens, there are seen,
  Nor perfumes load the breeze,
Nor hears the ear material sound,
Yet joys at God's right hand are found,
  The archetypes of these.
There is the home, the land of birth
Of all we highest prize on earth;
The storms that rack this world beneath
  Must there forever cease;
The only air the blessed breathe
  Is purity and peace.

O, happy, happy land! in thee
Shines the unveiled Divinity,
Shedding through each adoring breast
A holy calm, a halcyon rest.
And those blest souls whom death did sever,
Have met to mingle joys forever.
O soon may heaven unclose to me!
O, may I soon that glory see;
And my faint, weary spirit stand
Within that happy, happy land!

"THE LAND WHICH NO MORTAL MAY KNOW."

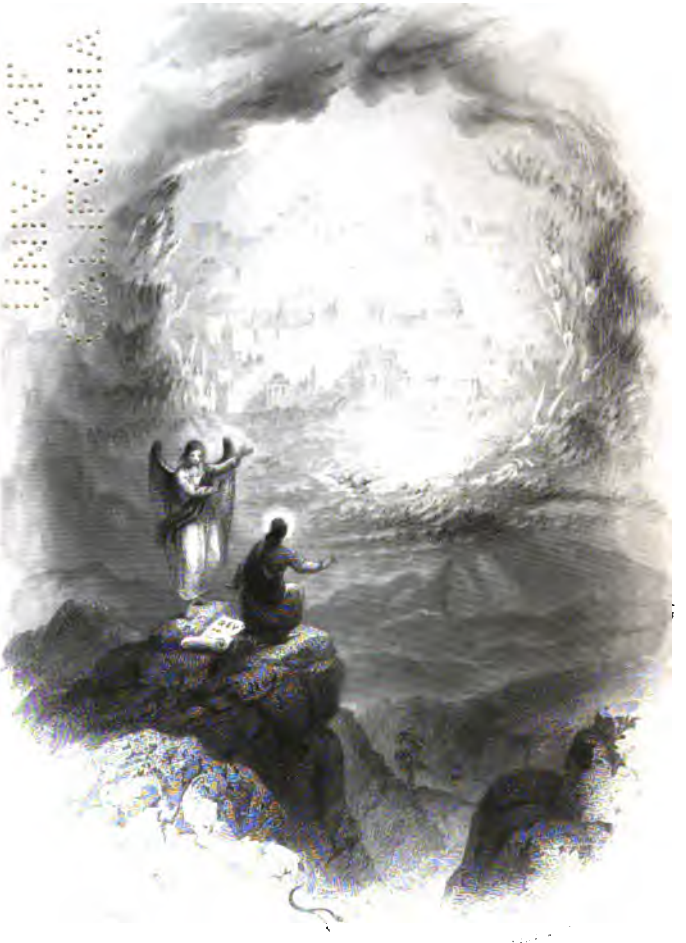
BY BERNARD BARTON.

THOUGH Earth has full many a beautiful spot,
As a poet or painter might show;
Yet more lovely and beautiful, holy and bright,
To the hopes of the heart, and spirit's glad sight,
Is the land that no mortal may know.

There the crystalline stream, burst forth from the Throne,
Flows on, and forever will flow;
Its waves, as they roll, are with melody rife,
And its waters are sparkling with beauty and life,
In the land which no mortal may know.

And there, on its margin, with leaves ever green,
With its fruits healing sickness and wo,
The fair tree of life! in its glory and pride,
Is fed by the deep, inexhaustible tide,
On the land which no mortal may know.

There, too, are the lost! whom we loved on this earth,
With those memories our bosoms yet glow;
Their relics we gave to the place of the dead,
But their glorified spirits before us have fled
To the land which no mortal may know.



I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven.

Rev. Ch. XXI. v. 5

XIV.

HEAVEN CONCEIVABLE ONLY TO THE CHRISTIAN.

BY REV. ALEXANDER H. VINTON, D. D.

THE great blessings of redemption surpassing all human experience and even outreaching the power of thought, are forcibly expressed in the words of the apostle Paul, quoted from the prophecy of Isaiah, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." In addressing the Corinthians the writer brought to light mysteries of wisdom and mercy, which the best endowed of men had never understood. A method of salvation for the sinful had been the object of blind longing to all the world, because salvation was the world's great want.

Yet men thus pined for a gift of whose measure and quality they were ignorant. The apostle is speaking primarily of salvation as a proof of divine wisdom, but there can be no impropriety in extending his remark, to embrace the fruits of that plan as it shall be developed in heaven. Not only, therefore, does the wisdom of the plan of redemption surpass the conceptions of human wisdom, but the joys of a finished salvation will be superior to all that eye hath ever seen, ear ever heard, or hath ever entered into the heart of man.

Every person has probably formed to himself an idea of heaven, for every creature loves happiness, and it is impossible that any thinking being should not, at times, endeavor to conceive of something like happiness in its perfection. Now when we look upon mankind and witness the different enjoyments that are preferred by one and another, we must conclude that their views of heaven are no less diverse. Immortal felicity would be to each man the perfection of his own chosen indulgence. Even the besotted mind of the sensualist dreams delightedly of a state in which his lust shall have no pause and no satiety, — in which passion's gloating eye shall only lead the way to

sure and eternal indulgence. And this is his heaven, — the paradise of Mahomet, and lust's long carnival. And every other form of human desire instinctively hopes for a state in which that desire shall find its full gratification, and realize its heaven.

It cannot be that such different ideas of God's felicity can all be true, and with the Bible open before us, we cannot doubt that they are all equally false. We know that nothing that defileth, or is unclean, shall ever enter the presence of God. We know that the heaven of ambition, of avarice, of pride, of vanity, of fashion, of every selfish passion, must be the hateful opposite of that heaven where God reigns supreme in his holiness. The eye, the ear, the heart, and mind of the unsanctified, are all strangers to the true idea of the heaven of the Bible. But to the Christian, the bliss of immortality is not strange, because God hath revealed it to him by his Spirit.

I do not mean by this that even the most advanced Christian can fully comprehend the extent of that glorious felicity which God hath prepared for them that love him, — for this he has never experienced either with eye, or ear, or mind. But the

nature of heavenly happiness every regenerated child of God can understand, because his new heart has already taught him, in the sweet communion of divine things, which is but the foretaste of immortal bliss.

The difference between the Christian's conception of heaven and that of the unrenewed, is a difference in kind. He knows what heaven is, though he knows not how great and overwhelming is its joy; but the unconverted soul is wrong in its first conception of immortal happiness. His hopes and his trusts are a fatal falsehood from beginning to end.

Let us contemplate some of the elements of that joy which will constitute the inheritance of all the saved. They are set forth in Scripture with various degrees of prominence, and however presented, they are suited to some one or other, of the various wants of the soul.

The first and most obvious is the idea of rest. The earnest invitation of the Saviour was, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" and the prophetic description of heaven is of a place "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Could a single word be found that should comprehend such forceful meaning to the majority of our great family? Toil and weariness of flesh and soul, are a part of the primeval curse. There is no human being who does not groan with the burden of life if he live long enough to know what life really is. Nay, the apostle by a strong figure of personification, represents the inanimate creation as groaning with the burden of its constant trouble and confusion, and longing for a deliverance. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together with the bondage of corruption. Who that has waded only half across the stream of human life has not found himself buffeted by some wave of trouble, hindered by some rock of difficulty, mired in some hopeless undertaking that foiled all his labors, until he has been ready to wish, either that he were well across the stream, or that he had never been forced to begin the passage; lamenting the day of his birth, and almost ready to anticipate his death, were it not for the dark hereafter that imbosoms his destiny? What a large proportion of mankind are doomed to the mere unthinking toil of bone and muscle, whose disappointed longing, morning

and evening, is for simple rest. How many in a better sphere of life have wrestled with agonies of soul and mind worse than the weariness of the flesh, till the very pith of life's enjoyment was exhausted, and they looked upon any change as a blessing because it brought repose. Indeed, although God has tempered the severity of the first curse of man, and has given to labor many an incitement and many a reward; there are very few of human kind to whom a state of perfect rest would not be the heaven of their wishes; for "all things," says the sacred preacher, "are full of labor — man cannot utter it." Hence the great blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord; even so saith the spirit, for they rest from their labors.

It is, therefore, one of the chief elements of a Christian's hope and joy, that there remaineth a rest for the people of God. Not indeed that he cannot bear his labors here with a steady mind, for he can endure all things, through Christ strengthening him. And not that he looks forward to a drowsy and voluptuous indolence, in which his soul shall rest eternally, without energy or vigor or enterprise, fanned by soft airs, fed with sweet odors, and soothed by dreamy melo-

dies. This is the rest of the sensualist. But the repose of heaven comes from that exhaustless vigor which is superior to fatigue; which knows not the meaning of the word toil, and to which ceaseless activity is only the exhilarating consciousness of being immortal. It is the repose of great power, always calm and unperturbed, hailing each new enterprise, and remembering all its former weariness only to rejoice the more in the perfect rest of its sufficiency. And the beauty and excellency of this rest is, that it is prepared for those who love God. It is only when their faculties are trained to act in obedience to him that their power is effectual. The activity of a holy will is a pure delight, because it flows in the same current with the will of God. The energy of wickedness is a curse and weariness, because the stronger it is, the more it feels the opposition of omnipotence. This sort of rest the unrenewed cannot conceive of; but to the Christian heart God has revealed it already in the foretaste of its delight.

Another element of heaven which the Christian will enjoy, but which the irreligious never knew by eye or ear or thought, is *peace*. First of all,

peace with God, then peace with each other. Peace with God, because the natural enmity of the heart is slain, and the loving spirit of the Christian has learned to look upon him with a gratitude that crowds his whole bosom. The feeling that used to rise in rebellion against his dealings, that hugged the sweet sins of impenitence, and scorned the bleeding Saviour, that feeling is delightedly subdued. Let God manifest himself to the renewed soul as he may, with a rod or a premium, by sickness of body, sorrow of the heart, poverty, widowhood, or by a prosperous providence and health and domestic joy, the Christian enjoys God in every thing when he is prosperous, and enjoys every thing in God when he is afflicted and cast down. So entirely reconciled is his own heart to the moral government of heaven, so profoundly willing is he that God should reign, and reign just as he pleases, that this inward reconciliation becomes the source of the purest peace. Transfer the Christian to Heaven, and exalt that sense of peace towards God to such a pitch as befits a perfected state, and it forms an element of eternal bliss. And this peace is even heightened by the enrapturing assurance that God is recon-

ciled to him as well as he to God. The doom of sin, whose hoarse echo used sometimes to rebound upon him even in the hours of his converted life, and startle his soul into temporary dismay, — that doom echoes no more to him. The doubts that used sometimes to steal in upon his privacy and cloud the whole horizon of faith, and turn even his prayers to gloom, doubts that even the cross and the crucified could not quite dispel, — those doubts are dissolved in the perfect brightness with which he sees and feels all around him, that God is not his enemy, that Jesus did not bleed and groan in vain for him. His eye and ear and heart never knew before that fulness of joy. The peace of God which passeth all understanding of the Christian on earth, becomes therefore an added element of his eternal bliss; for he has the waking consciousness, in every pulse of his beatified life, that for him there is no more curse.

Yet again, heaven is a state of happy peace, because the redeemed themselves, loving and loved, have no strife with each other. The mutual jealousies that disturb the church on earth; the pride that looks down in contempt upon the unfashionable and poor, and the envy that looks up in hot

resentment upon the rich and high; the suspicion of others' unsoundness in the faith; the scandal that is reported of their errors and faults, — these feelings, and such as these, which mar the unity of Christ's body, and sometimes turn a church of holy brethren into an assembly of wranglers, and change the communion of the saints to a common hypocrisy, — these, there is nothing like these in heaven. Brothers in Christ fraternize there if not here. They see eye to eye. Heart lays itself alongside of heart, and they beat with one common pulse of affection and confidence. Every cold-hearted and unkind feeling, is consumed in the generous fervor of that holy love which melts all heaven to tenderness, and fills heaven with peace. Would that eye might see, and ear hear, and heart might know more of this happy oneness on earth. But the true Christian has tasted its quality even here, and among the first evidences by which he knew that he had passed from death unto life, was that he loved the brethren. Let Christians cherish this feeling more and more, and realize the unity of the Christian spirit, lest if they should go to heaven, they should need to be regenerated anew.

Heaven also is a place of riches such as eye hath not seen, etc. It is depicted to us as a treasure imperishable, which moth and rust cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. By such images does the inspiration of the Almighty shadow forth the conception of heaven to human understanding and desire. Yet how unlike is the reality of this treasure, to the riches of the world which stand for its type. While our wealth perishes in the using, while the more we have the more we want, while its increase is apt to make us more selfish, narrowing the soul to an object this side of heaven, and steeling the heart against the appeals of kindly charity, till we find it easier to expend tenfold upon ourselves, than to bestow a tithe for the Saviour; while thus every gain eagerly sought, becomes a snare until our trust in riches makes it hard to enter into the kingdom of heaven, the riches of heaven never fade, never tempt the soul to avarice, never awaken a throb of selfish desire, but fill, as with the sense of eternal sufficiency, the heart to the whole circle of created want, inspire it with a generosity that seeks to enrich the world, and deepens our love to the Great Giver.

Such is heaven's wealth known here only to the Christian who is rich in the contentment of trust in God, who spurns not indeed the providential prosperity, but who will give ten times more to relieve an unfortunate man, rather than take advantage of his necessity to enrich himself. Let him that heareth, in this covetous age, understand how easily the gains of this life may impoverish his eternity, and doom him to the sentence, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things."

Again, heaven, as a state of surpassing excellence, is represented as a scene of pleasures, such as eye hath not seen, etc. "In thy presence," says the Psalmist, "is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures forevermore:" "the faithful shall be satisfied with the fatness of his house, and shall be made to drink of the river of his pleasures." Pleasure, that name of a sweet poison! Pleasure, that bliss of the body and torment of the soul! Pleasure, that forgets every thing in the joy of pursuit, and is condemned to remember nothing else but the shame of the indulgence, — worldly pleasure, how can it stand as the type of heaven? Only by contrast, surely.

Yet heaven is pleasure in its unearthly nature and its sublime degree. For every faculty will be attuned to joy, every nerve strung to ecstasy. Are there pleasures of sight for the bodies of the resurrection, such as the eye hath not seen on earth? Then think of the objects of vision fitted to the immortalized powers, where the eye looks through a flood of transparency upon all the works of God; where worlds and worlds shine together, not in meagre rays but in near and full-orbed splendor; where creation unfolds itself to the eye not in perspective and piecemeal, but in one broad map, as to the eye of God; where the light itself is the uncreated brightness of his presence, and where the eye is so strong in power that it can gaze right at the living glory, and be neither dazzled nor dismayed, but rapt into conscious bliss.

Are there pleasures of *hearing* for the bodies of the resurrection such as ear hath not heard on earth? Then think again of the sounds suited to the faculties of our immortality, where the gentle breathing of the atmosphere, or the rush of a hallelujah, or that voice which is as the sound of many waters, shall each be like sweet music, and

such harmony as can be known only in the presence of God! And will not the mind have its pleasures in heaven such as have not entered into the heart? Freed from the thraldom of the flesh, full of the wholesome vigor of immortality, quick, penetrating, untried, will not its exercises be the purest intellectual delight? What can exceed the enjoyment, for example, that would spring from the unthought of increase of its knowledge, when instead of standing as we do here at the outside portals of truth, and catching through the half open door broken glimpses of the beauty and light within, we are ushered into the secret places of knowledge, traverse the radiant chambers, tracing out the principles of things, and following them up to broader, brighter, sublimer degrees, until we reach the very source of truth, and stand face to face before the truth embodied in the living God!

Are there not, besides, joys of memory, and will not they be fruitful in heaven, full of the bliss of gratitude? How will the mind of a saved sinner love to travel over his past life, and recall and revolve its events, human and divine; his own errors, and God's correction of them; how

he would have ruined himself, and heaven forfended it; how, when he used to spurn divine grace and rebel against divine control, God drew him out of the mire and clay of his sins, and set his feet upon a rock, and established his goings, and drew him affectionately to salvation! When he remembers all this, and views the past by eternity's light, and interprets his history by its issue of glory, will not retrospection be a pleasure, such as never entered his heart before, and while it fills him with amazement and humility, will it not exalt him with the ecstasy of gratitude, and make him love to *remember* forevermore? Such are some of the delights as yet unfelt by mortal experience, unconceived by mortal mind, prepared for the children of God, — pleasures of sense and pleasures of the intellect, such as our glorified humanity alone can know!

But we should be most unjust to our delightful theme, and throw an air of falsity over the whole view, if we should neglect to notice one other source of pleasure prepared for the sainted dead in glory, — the pleasures of the heart, the delight of gratified affection. For remember that all the unspeakable bliss of heaven is prepared for those

alone, who love God. And while this love is thus the condition of heaven's happiness, it is itself the source and spring of heaven's highest rapture. A love it is, not like our human loves, built upon accident or propinquity, poisoned even when strongest by jealousy, disturbed by a careless word, broken by a difference of opinion, estranged by self-interest, turned into hate by a slight or neglect, — but a love that is like a new life, supreme within the breast, commanding all our powers, inspiring all our motives, and springing up unceasingly from gratitude for the profoundest benefits of time and eternity; such a love — the Christian's love to God — hallowing his whole being, and making him a living temple. Faint and interrupted as this love so often is here, it cannot be so in heaven. If it could, heaven could not be happy. For in the *heart* of man alone resides his happiness, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth utters it. What must be the intensity of that pleasure of the heart, when it is brought into the very presence of its adorable object, — when the days and years of its eternity are spent in communion with him, — when new gifts ceaselessly bestowed by the loving father,

excite the immortalized nature of his child to new and newer returns of love! As he grows stronger in heaven, and more celestial in his whole character, the Christian will be more and more like God, and draw continually nearer to Him. This love to the Father must deepen as he approaches his perfect likeness, — his love to the Son, as he receives the fresh benefits of his atonement, — his love to the Spirit, as his blessed impulses support and urge him in the upward path of increasing purity.

I *know* that it hath never entered into the heart of the holiest Christian on earth to fathom the deep of that felicity of love. The holiest Christian can only know enough of it to know that it will be his nature's highest bliss, and to know, besides, that his nature can never be so filled with that bliss that he shall want no more. For this blessed communion with God his heart longs. It is this which makes him have a desire to depart, and to say, who would not drop this load of clay and die to see thy face; when I awake in thy likeness, I shall be satisfied; come, Lord Jesus. And now, would that those who are Christians might live up to this high calling, holding the

prize in view, and preparing for God's inheritance by living as his heirs here on earth. How far short we are contented to be from our privileges. How deeply we might foretaste, if we would, the bliss that we hope for. How much higher might be our first stand in heaven, if we would but aim to begin our heaven here below. Let us, then, aim for a deeper religious experience. Let us live more apart from our worldliness, and more near to God by prayer and heavenly meditation. Let us ask his Spirit to increase the fervor and truth of our love, and to reveal to us more fully the things, that he hath prepared for his affectionate children.

REST.

"REST for the weary, rest!
For oh! he cannot bear
The heavy weight that fills his breast, —
The crushing load of care.
Year after year rolls on,
But no relief is given, —
O, when will the burdened, weary one
Be blessed with the peace of heaven?

"Rest for the soldier, rest!
His mortal foes are strong;
They have smitten the plume of his blazon'd crest,
And the battle hath lasted long;
His standard trails the ground;
And his hopes are even as low;
And again doth the trumpet's awakening sound
Bespeak the advancing foe.

"Rest for the pilgrim, rest!
The way is lone and drear;
The red lights fade in the distant west,
And the dark'ning clouds appear.
He longs for his father's home,
Where the palm-trees proudly rise;
And the shadows of eve may come
To mantle the radiant skies.

"Rest for the mourner, rest!
O, when will the yawning grave
Delight not to take the dearest and best
Of the lovely and the brave!
Our hands have scarcely borne
One friend to his narrow bed,
Ere another, by painful sickness worn,
Is numbered with the dead.

"Rest for the ransomed, rest!
The gate of death is past;
O, mingle your voice with the songs of the blest,
For your home is found at last.
The mourner's tears are gone,—
The pilgrim's toils are o'er,—
The soldier a glorious crown hath won,—
And the weary cares no more."

XV.

PRAISE, THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE INHABITANTS OF HEAVEN.

BY REV. EDWARD N. KIRK, D. D.

THE servants of God who have left the earth are not lost either to God, or to the great family of the good. We have not only the assurance of this, but information concerning their place of abode, and their employments in the bright regions above.

In the splendid visions granted to St. John, he beheld the living creatures, the angels and the redeemed round about the throne, engaged in the worship of the Father and of the Lamb. And the idea is prominently presented in the Scriptures, that adoration will constitute one of the chief and most delightful employments, of the blessed in the world of glory.

Probably many who are preparing themselves for heaven, have not sufficiently anticipated its peculiar occupations. Now, to remove any doubts about the blessedness of this employment, and to enlist our hearts more fully in its beginnings here on earth, let us call to mind the fact that the employment God furnishes us here, comes by the exercise of our own powers and feelings. What interest have we in literature, in society, in travelling, but that which comes from the exercise of our own powers by means of them? We may need objects out of the sphere of our own being, to draw forth our faculties into exercise. But in that exercise we are to find our happiness. And the nobler the faculty we exercise, the more elevated our enjoyment. With this thought in view, we would remark that

The praise of God will result from the highest employment of the intellect.

Observe the themes which are to engage the minds of angels, and of the redeemed, as expressed in their anthem: "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for, thou hast created all

things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." "And when the Lamb had taken the book, the four living creatures, and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and they sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

Among the grandest pursuits of men on earth are intellectual researches. The loftiest minds have found ample sources of enjoyment, both in their intellectual efforts, and in contemplating the intellectual efforts of others. None can doubt that Kepler and Newton enjoyed a most refined and exalted satisfaction in studying the mighty forces and masses of creation, and the mightier laws which control their movements. How exalted must have been the delight of Plato in entering the sublime sphere of philosophic research; or that of Milton in creating an ideal world!

But what is the intellectual employment of heaven? The living creatures, mighty angels, glowing seraphim, and redeemed men are think-

ing of the holy Lord God Almighty. With purified, quickened intellect, each inhabitant has entered that great school where God is seen in his works; above his works; infinitely more glorious than his most glorious works. If science, with its wonders of astronomy, geology, and chemistry, has enraptured the minds of its diligent disciples, what must be their delight who have passed from dim mirrors, and thick veils, to look with open face on Him who created all that is! They study him whose duration comprehends infinity of time and space, eternity past and future. They study the universe through its almighty and glorious author. All duration, grandeur, strength, and beauty are in him, and of him. They learn in Him the final cause or rational end of the universe. And that is the profoundest and sublimest knowledge. What an impression, then, must it make on their minds, to study in Him the vast end of creation! How profound in wisdom; how pure in motive! "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty! O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

Then the mind has another theme of enrapturing study. It is redeeming grace. Paul, who

studied it more profoundly, perhaps, than any other of our race, found in it the sources of sublimest joy, even here on earth. Was there on earth a man whom he could envy? Read his epistles glowing with angelic raptures wherever the grace of God, the person and the work of the Redeemer, cross the disk of his telescope. We find now great delight in contemplating the displays of philanthropy and public spirit which adorn the annals of our race. And they are a legitimate source of delight. What, then, must be the feelings of that vast multitude who are themselves the objects of redeeming mercy, who are inheriting its richest blessings, and looking on the face of their divine benefactor! Here the social feeling finds its most enrapturing exercises. Each one is animated by gazing first on the Redeemer, and then on the redeemed; such a Saviour; such a salvation! Well may they fall down before him that sits on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever, and cast their crowns before him, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

We are inquiring after the sources of happiness in heaven; not so much from what we may become, which, the Scriptures declare, is as yet beyond our powers of conception, but from what we as yet know of our capacity for happiness. And we have now taken but that one description of heaven which includes its meditations and its praises; of which we have thus far said and showed what intellectual delight and satisfaction, nay, rapturous joy it may afford. Perhaps the rapture is the effect of joy acting on our present unbalanced frames. Be it so, or not; it is to us, at present, of little consequence. But we find a type of one form of heaven's joy when we see the Grecian philosopher in ecstasy exclaiming at the mere discovery of one principle in nature, "Eureka, eureka;" or, see the philosopher of Syracuse so absorbed in his studies, as to permit himself to be slain by the soldiery, without an attempt to leave the place of danger. We see something of it in the enthusiasm of Kepler's feelings in reviewing his discoveries in astronomy, and Gibbon's feelings on finishing his History of the Roman Empire.

We have, then, in our spiritual nature, yet

another avenue of joy, which the praises of heaven will bring into the fullest exercise. For want of a better word, we call it

The æsthetic faculty, or sensibility.

It is that by which a flower, a cataract, a star, a sunset, a poem, or music charm us. And in regard to this faculty, it is ascertained that material beauty charms us most when it is expressive of, or symbolizes moral excellence; and that moral excellence is the highest form of beauty; furnishing the most pure, refining, and enduring delight to the mind. But holiness is the sum of moral excellence. Our depraved race now see it by glimpses. One admires order; another, justice; another, rectitude; another, patriotism, honor, kindness, self-sacrifice, disinterestedness, delicate perception of others' feelings, veracity, fidelity, magnanimity. The most abandoned loves one or more of these qualities; for everybody seems to have a favorite virtue. But, when we shall come to be purified from all that is defiling, emancipated from all that is enslaving, and illuminated with heavenly light, then shall we demand the perfection of character, the whole cluster of the graces constituting a perfect unit; the combined

and blended rays of the rainbow, to make a perfect atmosphere of light. Then, when the unclouded character of God shall shine forth, when his moral government shall be comprehended, every holy intelligence enraptured will exclaim with angels and men, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty!" Justice, truth, love, wisdom, wielding all power, guiding all events, reconstructing a world without moral blemish, educing greatest good from greatest evil; this will inspire every holy creature with the loftiest joy of which creatures are capable. And the completion of that joy will be found in its social utterance in praise; with beings that have never sinned, and a race redeemed from sin.

There is, then, one other source of holy joy. It is found in the gratification of

The benevolent feelings. A strict analysis would include this class of feelings in those just mentioned. But they are distinct in this respect, when we contemplate the value of happiness, we love that happiness; and whatever promises to promote it, we love, merely considered as a means to that end. And the more complete the assurance it furnishes that it can and will secure

that end, the more it delights a benevolent mind. But the moral beauty of benevolence is something distinct from its mere utility. It is the intrinsic loveliness of virtue. That we have been considering. Now we turn to notice the desire of every holy angel and redeemed human being, to see benevolence or love on the eternal throne, armed with Omnipotence; able to overrule evil, without destroying moral agency; full of kindness toward the dependent creation his power has brought into existence; fixed in the immutable purpose to make a paradise, across whose boundaries no serpent should ever crawl again; and now in a condition in which his wisdom deems it right to pledge, that their blessedness is made as really immutable as His own. Is it strange, then, that all the inhabitants of heaven rest not, day nor night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty; thou art worthy to receive glory, and honor, and power?"

We must be careful of two extremes in regard to all the descriptions of heaven; that of indefinite, vague thought, which destroys its attractiveness to hope; and that materializing literalness of interpretation, which makes heaven appear the

less desirable, the more fit we become for it. There are probably no harps there. If John had written in our day, he would perhaps have named the organ. But the harp and the organ, and the more exquisite voice of the present body can, at best, but faintly symbolize the joyous employments of that world.

Let us then remember that the meaning of the apostle's language is literally, that we shall be so affected by nothing as by the character, government, and grace of God; we shall feel no claim on our love and gratitude to be in any way comparable to the claim of his providence and grace; that our love, gratitude, and joyous thanksgiving will be no hinderance to any needed attention to our own welfare, or to any employment of our powers for the public good. Praise is represented as the one employment of heaven, then, in order to contrast that state of existence with ours here on earth. Here we are commanded, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God. Few obey it here; none, perfectly, perhaps. There, every act is praise, every word is praise. No created glory dazzles any created vision; no creature act turns any creature thought from God. Crea-

tures love each other perfectly there; but it is because they love God supremely. No duty to the Commonwealth is there neglected; for each citizen of heaven resembles the earth; which, while it turns on its own axis, giving light to its own inhabitants, at the same time yields to the higher attractions of the mighty central orb, and sweeps on in its magnificent sphere, to perform its part in the vast solar system. It is the annual, solar revolution, not the diurnal, axial movement, which the apostle describes.

If such be our prospects, one thing is then manifest; we ought to be preparing ourselves for that state of blessedness, and that heavenly employment. One thing is manifest; self and the world must be dethroned in our hearts, and the thrice holy ONE who is, and was, and is to come, who has created all things, and for whose pleasure they exist, and were created, must become supreme in our intellects, sensibilities, and wills. Pride, selfishness, and worldliness, as manifested in our lives, are to be deplored; and, as found in our hearts, are to be renounced. A true and profound repentance is the first step to all spiritual improvement; a repentance so deep, that in the contem-

plation of God, all worldly gain, greatness, and honor, shall fade out like the stars before the rising glory of the Infinite and Eternal One; in which we shall come to loathe and abhor ourselves because we have had such low and unworthy conceptions of Him. If we now have a crown which we would not joyfully cast from our brow at Emmanuel's feet; if any thing can stir our souls like the manifestation of his glory, then we have much to do in preparation for our residence in heaven. If our hearts are not full of admiration and joy at the contemplation of God in providence, creation, and redemption, then we are not ready for heaven. Let Christians with tears confess before their Lord, that they are all too unprepared for that world which they are so soon to enter, and to dwell in for ever; for that society they are so soon to join, and enjoy for ever; for that worship in which they are soon to participate; for that anthem they are to sing, day and night, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." That earthly life is thrown away, an utter waste, which does not terminate in a full preparedness to take our place and portion in the worship of God by the heavenly hosts.

"WHAT MUST IT BE TO BE THERE!"

"We speak of the realms of the blest,
Of that country so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confessed;
But what must it be to be there!

"We speak of its pathways of gold,
And its walls decked with jewels most rare,
Of its wonders and pleasures untold,
But what must it be to be there!

"We speak of its freedom from sin,
From sorrow, temptation, and care,
From trials without and within;
But what must it be to be there!

"We speak of its service of love,
Of the robes which the glorified wear,
Of the church of the first-born above;
But what must it be to be there!

"Then let us, midst pleasure and woe,
Still for heaven our spirits prepare;
And shortly we also shall know
And feel what it is to be there!"

THE CELESTIAL CITY.

THE golden palace of my God,
Towering above the clouds, I see;
Beyond the cherub's bright abode,
Higher than angel's thoughts can be.
How can I in those courts appear,
Without a wedding garment on?
Conduct me, thou Life-giver, there,
Conduct me to thy glorious throne!
And clothe me with thy robes of light,
And lead me through sin's darksome night,
My Saviour and my God.

RUSSIAN POETRY.

RK
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